ADRIFT
SMOOCH
UNIVERSE 0/0

ADRIFT

THANKS TO CANECA DE POMBO, CAROL EVELYN, CILENE TYLER, FERNANDA, GABRIELA ARAUJO, GOBBI, IRLA SVENDSEN, EVIL, JOÃO PAULO, LIA LOPES, MAIARA BORGES, MARCELO PINTO, PIETRO NN, RENATO FQ, TEÓGENES, THAÍS ARVELOS, THE WIFE, THISMACHINE, VNETD, WLLYSSYS, ZAGO AND YOU!

KÉYPIO
ARTWORK
@KEYPIO_COMIC

LUIZ ROSA
ARTWORK
@LUIZZ_ROSA

FAUSTO
COVER
@FAUSTO_RABISCOS

TEMERO
BACK COVER
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DEAD ROACH
ADDITIONAL ART
@DEADROACHCOMICS

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WRITER
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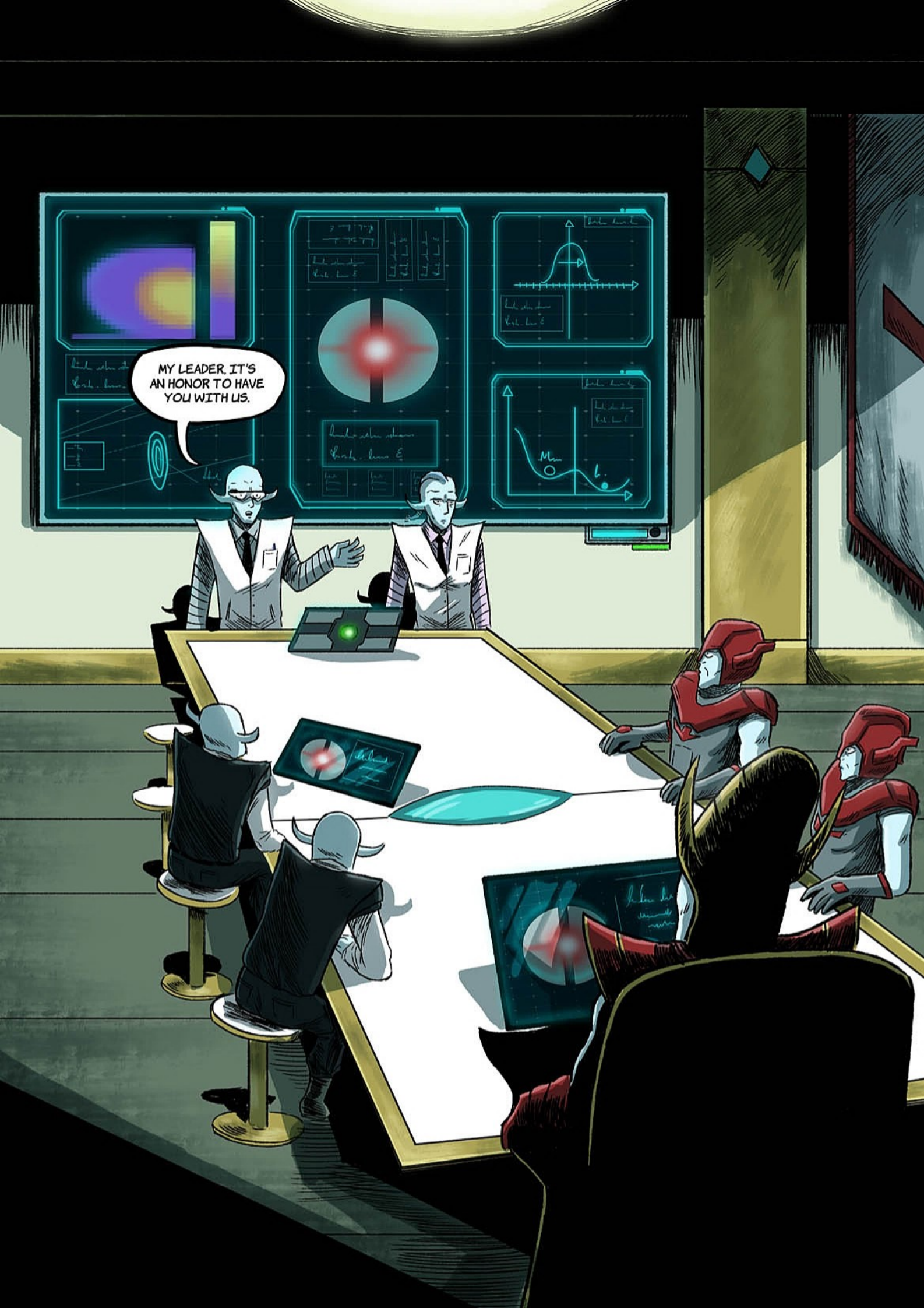
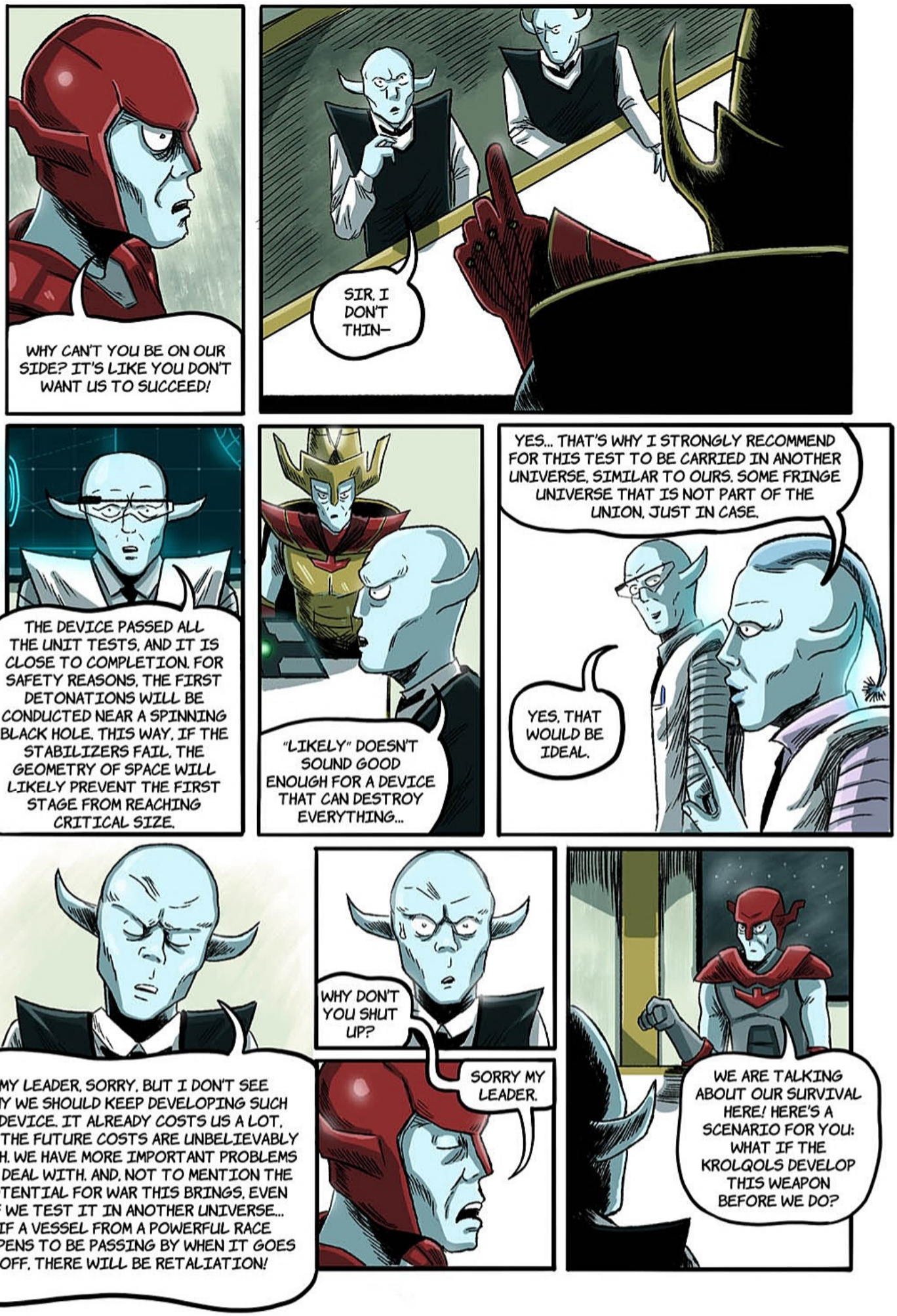

MY LEADER, IT'S AN HONOR TO HAVE YOU WITH US.

COULD YOU PLEASE BRIEF OUR LEADER ON THE OVERALL FUNCTIONALITY OF THE DEVICE?
OF COURSE.
AHEM... AS WE ALL KNOW, THE UNION BANNED US FROM TRADING MILITARY HARDWARE WITH OTHER UNIVERSES FOR THEY RATED OURS AS TYPE OO-I, A METASTABLE UNIVERSE.
A SHITTY UNIVERSE! THAT'S HOW THEY REFERRED TO US WHEN OUR INGRESS WAS DENIED!
CONTINUE...
THANK YOU, MY LEADER. IN OUR QUEST TO BE RESPECTED, OUR GREAT MINDS DEVELOPED THIS DEVICE, WHICH WORKS BY EXCITING A PARTICLE TO SUCH HIGH ENERGIES THAT IT FORCES A REGION OF SPACE TO UNDERGO A PHASE TRANSITION INTO ITS TRUE GROUND STATE.
WE DON'T KNOW FOR SURE IF IT WOULD BE ITS TRUE GROUND STATE, BUT IT WOULD BE IN A LOWER ENERGY DENSITY THAN IT IS NOW.
YES, MY COLLEAGUE IS RIGHT. ONCE THIS REGION OF SPACE REACHES SUCH A STATE, A VACUUM STARTS EXPANDING OUTWARD, RELEASING A PLETHORA OF ENERGY. ANYTHING THAT IS NOT COMPLETELY DESTROYED WILL BE ENGULFED INTO A REGION THAT IS LIKELY TO UNDERGO GRAVITATIONAL COLLAPSE.
EVEN IF IT DOESN'T COLLAPSE, THE FIELDS INSIDE IT WILL NOT BE COMPATIBLE WITH STRUCTURES THAT EXIST OUTSIDE.

A COMPLETE DESTRUCTION... I LIKE THIS!
BUT... IT JUST KEEPS GOING ON FOREVER?
NO, NOT FOREVER. THE EXPANSION HAPPENS AT SPEEDS NEAR THAT OF LIGHT, MAYBE SLOWER, MAYBE FASTER—
FASTER THAN LIGHT? ARE YOU CREATING A BOMB THAT EVEN WE CAN'T ESCAPE FROM?
THIS IS JUST THE FIRST PART OF THE PROCESS. THE DEVICE CONSISTS OF TWO PARTS: THE STARTER, WHICH, WELL, STARTS THE PROCESS AND A SECOND ONE CONSISTING IN AN ARRAY OF SPACE STABILIZERS. THESE STABILIZERS DISTORT THE SPACE GEOMETRY TO PREVENT THE DECAY FROM CONTINUING TO GROW.
IT'S CRUCIAL THAT THE ACTIVATION OF THE STABILIZERS HAPPENS IN PERFECT SYNCHRONIZATION WITH THE STARTER. OTHERWISE, THE STABILIZERS WILL JUST BE DESTROYED.
IF IT'S GOING FASTER THAN LIGHT... OR EVEN AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT_ HOW DO YOU INTEND TO SIGNAL EACH STABI LIZER IN ORDER TO KEEP THE SYSTEM IN SYNC?
WE ARE USING THE ENTANGLE FIELD TO SIGNAL THE ACTIVATION. THE PROBLEM IS THAT IT JUST WORKS ONCE... IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG THE FIRST TIME, THERE IS NO SECOND TRY. THE CORRECT THING TO DO WOULD BE TO COMMUNICATE VIA THE SUBLAYER, SENDING THE SIGNAL OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSE AND REFLECTING IT BACK.
WE ARE BANNED FROM USING THE SUBLAYER.


WHY CAN'T YOU BE ON OUR SIDE? IT'S LIKE YOU DON'T WANT US TO SUCCEED!
SIR, I DON'T THIN—
THE DEVICE PASSED ALL THE UNIT TESTS, AND IT IS CLOSE TO COMPLETION. FOR SAFETY REASONS, THE FIRST DETONATIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED NEAR A SPINNING BLACK HOLE. THIS WAY, IF THE STABILIZERS FAIL, THE GEOMETRY OF SPACE WILL LIKELY PREVENT THE FIRST STAGE FROM REACHING CRITICAL SIZE.
"LIKELY" DOESN'T SOUND GOOD ENOUGH FOR A DEVICE THAT CAN DESTROY EVERYTHING...
YES... THAT'S WHY I STRONGLY RECOMMEND FOR THIS TEST TO BE CARRIED IN ANOTHER UNIVERSE, SIMILAR TO OURS. SOME FRINGE UNIVERSE THAT IS NOT PART OF THE UNION, JUST IN CASE.
YES, THAT WOULD BE IDEAL.
MY LEADER, SORRY, BUT I DON'T SEE WHY WE SHOULD KEEP DEVELOPING SUCH A DEVICE. IT ALREADY COSTS US A LOT, AND THE FUTURE COSTS ARE UNBELIEVABLY HIGH. WE HAVE MORE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS TO DEAL WITH. AND, NOT TO MENTION THE POTENTIAL FOR WAR THIS BRINGS, EVEN IF WE TEST IT IN ANOTHER UNIVERSE... IF A VESSEL FROM A POWERFUL RACE HAPPENS TO BE PASSING BY WHEN IT GOES OFF, THERE WILL BE RETALIATION!
WHY DON'T YOU SHUT UP?
SORRY MY LEADER.
WE ARE TALKING ABOUT OUR SURVIVAL HERE! HERE'S A SCENARIO FOR YOU: WHAT IF THE KROLQOLS DEVELOP THIS WEAPON BEFORE WE DO?

THERE IS NO INTEL ON THE KROLQOLS DOING ANY THING LIKE THAT.
THAT WE KNOW OF!!!
QUIET, YOU TWO! I LIKED THE IDEA OF THIS DEVICE. END OF DISCUSSION!
I'M COUNTING ON YOU TO MAKE IT SAFER TO BE DEPLOYED TO OUR FORCES THE NEXT TIME WE REUNITE.
YES, SIR!
LET'S MOVE ON... TALKING ABOUT THE KROLQOLS. WHAT IS THE SITUATION?
QUICKLY DETERIORATING, SIR. I RECOMMEND WE TAKE A STEP BACK AND MAKE SOME CONCESSIONS. WE HAVE BEEN TOO BELLIGERENT TOWARD THEM, ESPECIALLY AFTER WE STARTED BOYCOTTING SOME OF THEIR PRODUCTS. WE ARE STILL VERY DEPENDENT ON THEM FOR A GREAT DEAL OF RAW MATERIALS, CHEAP TECHNOLOGY, AND FOOD FOR OUR MORE DISTANT COLONIES.
WE CANNOT BACK DOWN NOW. WE STILL DOMINATE OVER THE UNIVERSE, AND I'M NOT INTENDING TO SEE IT CHANGING!
WE WILL KEEP SUPREMACY, SIR!
THAT'S NOT THE POINT! WE DOMINATE OVER THIS UNIVERSE, TRUE. BUT IF WE DON'T STOP SPENDING TIME PREPARING FOR WAR... IF WE DON'T STOP FORCING THINGS ON OTHERS... THEN THE COLONIES WILL START TO SEE US AS INSECURE. THIS REFLECTS BADLY ON OUR IMAGE. THIS IS THE SEED OF INSURGENCY!
THE KROLQOLS ARE LOOKING FOR EXACTLY THAT! ALL THEY WANT IS FOR US TO LET OUR GUARD DOWN SO THEY CAN START EXPANDING THEIR INFERIOR CULTURE THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSE AND ULTIMATELY TAKE CONTROL OVER IT!
AS THEY ALREADY HAVE! IN COUNTLESS GALAXIES! THEY SHOULD BE ELIMINATED; THAT'S THE ONLY WAY THIS UNIVERSE WILL EVER BE TRULY AT PEACE!
IT'S UNWISE TO EVEN THINK ABOUT GOING TO WAR WITH THEM. NO, NOT UNWISE; I WOULD SAY IT'S REALLY DUMB! THEY MIGHT NOT BE AS ADVANCED AS WE ARE, BUT THEY POSSESS A VAST MILITARY FORCE, AND THEIR REGARD FOR LIFE IS WAY LOWER THAN OURS! THEY DON'T THINK ABOUT DEATH THE SAME WAY WE DO.

ONE THING YOU'VE SAID... THE IDEA OF GOING TO WAR AND CLEANING THIS UNIVERSE FROM THE KROLQOLS HAS INDEED PASSED THROUGH MY MIND, MORE THAN ONCE. STILL, HERE YOU ARE, SAYING IT'S AN UNWISE THOUGHT... NO... YOU'RE SAYING IT'S DUMB... SO, ARE YOU SUGGESTING I'M DUMB?
NO, SIR! NOT AT ALL... I... SORRY FOR MY MANNERS... I'M JUST WORRIED ABOUT OUR GREAT RACE! I'M SORRY...
IT'S OK... DON'T WORRY.
SHOW ME YOUR REPORTS ON THE KROLQOLS MILITARY FORCE AND THEIR ALLIES.

MANY MISTAKES
LATER...

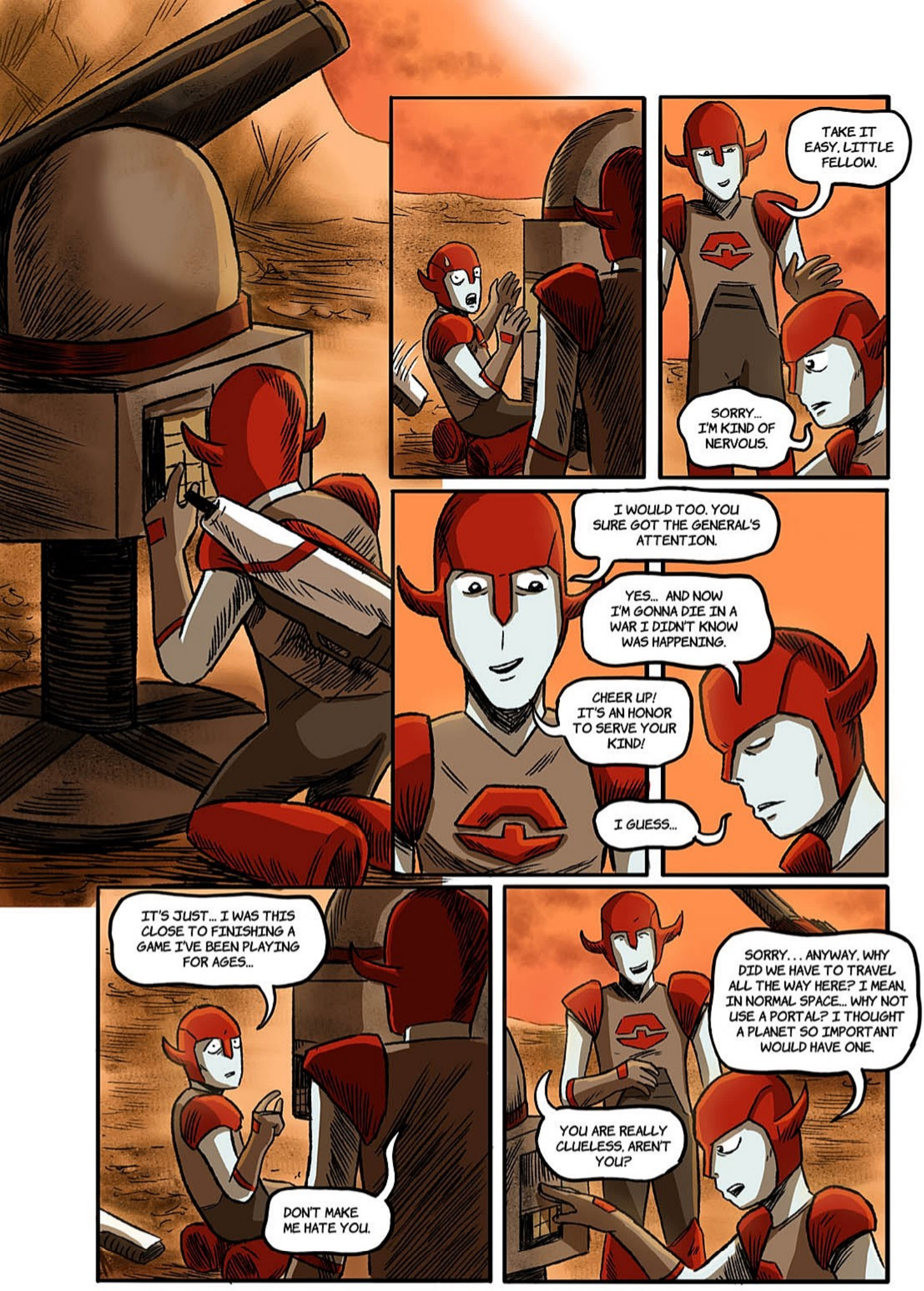
LISTEN UP!
THIS BATTLE IS TAKING LONGER THAN IT SHOULD! OUR LEADER IS COUNTING ON EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU TO PUT A STOP TO IT! WE'LL FINISH WHAT THE KROLQOLS STARTED!

WE ARE MOVING TO PLANET DEROKS 5. INTEL SAYS THE KROLQOLS ARE PLANNING ON INVADING TODAY!
FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE DUMB ENOUGH TO NOT KNOW ABOUT DEROKS 5, IT'S WHERE MOST OF THE RESOURCES FOR OUR EXTREMOPHILE DETACHMENT IN THAT SECTOR COMES FROM.
DO YOU WANT OUR FORCES TO FACE A SHORTAGE OF SUPPLIES?
NO, SIR!
NO, YOU DON'T!!!
HAVE ANY OF YOU ENGAGED IN A BATTLE NEAR A STAR? FEELING THE TIDAL FORCES RIPPING YOUR SHIP APART?
NO, SIR!
NO, YOU DON'T!!!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT A MAGNETAR CAN DO TO YOU IF YOU GET CLOSE TO IT WITHOUT PROPER EQUIPMENT?
I'M ASKING A QUESTION, SOLDIER!
IT WOULD... IT WOULD KILL ME, SIR!
YOU BET IT WOULD!!!
NEAR A MAGNETAR, IF YOU ARE UNLUCKY TO SURVIVE THE GRAVITY AND THE RADIATION COMING FROM IT, EXPECT YOUR ATOMS TO BE DISTORTED IN WAYS THAT MAKE YOUR LIFE'S CHEMISTRY COMPLETELY IMPOSSIBLE!
SO, LET'S MAKE SURE OUR SPECIALIZED DETACHMENT GETS WHAT THEY NEED TO DO THEIR JOBS! OR I WILL SEND ALL OF YOU TO TAKE THEIR PLACES!!!
ALWAYS REMEMBER, IF YOU SEE A KROLQOL, YOU FIRE! IF YOU THINK YOU SAW A KROLQOL, YOU FIRE! IF YOU SEE A ROCK THAT LOOKS LIKE A KROLQOL, YOU FIRE! UNDERSTOOD?
YES, SIR!

YES?
ERR...
TALK!
WHAT DOES A KROLQOL LOOK LIKE, SIR!?!?
DO YOU THINK YOU ARE FUNNY, SOLDIER?
NO, SIR! I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW WHAT A KROLQOL LOOKS LIKE, SIR!
HOW DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT?
THIS IS MY FIRST DAY, SIR!
WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING, SOLDIER?
I DIDN'T HAVE ONE, SIR! I WAS NOT AWARE OF THE WAR UNTIL THIS MORNING, SIR! I GOT GRABBED FROM MY BED THIS MORNING AND PUT IN A SHIP; THEY DIDN'T ANSWER ANY OF MY QUESTIONS AND SAID I SHOULD ASK IT TO MY SUPERIOR. THAT'S YOU, SIR!
YOUR NAME AND PLANET, SOLDIER

I'M VELPHOX, FROM PLANET NOMIA 331X, SIR.
AH! NOMIA 331X... OF COURSE... IT'S ALL CLEAR NOW!
THIS ONE HERE, HE'S FROM NOMIA 331X!!!
YOU SLOBS!!! LIVING IN UTTER DISREGARD FOR REALITY, ONLY STUDYING AND DEBATING USELESS THINGS! NOW IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO PAY FOR ALL THOSE YEARS OF GOOD LIFE OUR TROOPS ALLOWED YOU!
SHOW THIS MAGOT HOW A KROLQOL LOOKS!
YES, SIR!
STATUS REPORT ON THE TARGET!
STATUS REPORT: NO SIGNS OF ENEMY ACTIVITY IN DEROKS 5.
I DON'T LIKE THAT! YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS? IT MEANS YOU HAVE TO DEPLOY THE ANTI-SHIP BATTERIES FASTER! THE KROLQOLS ARE UP TO SOMETHING!

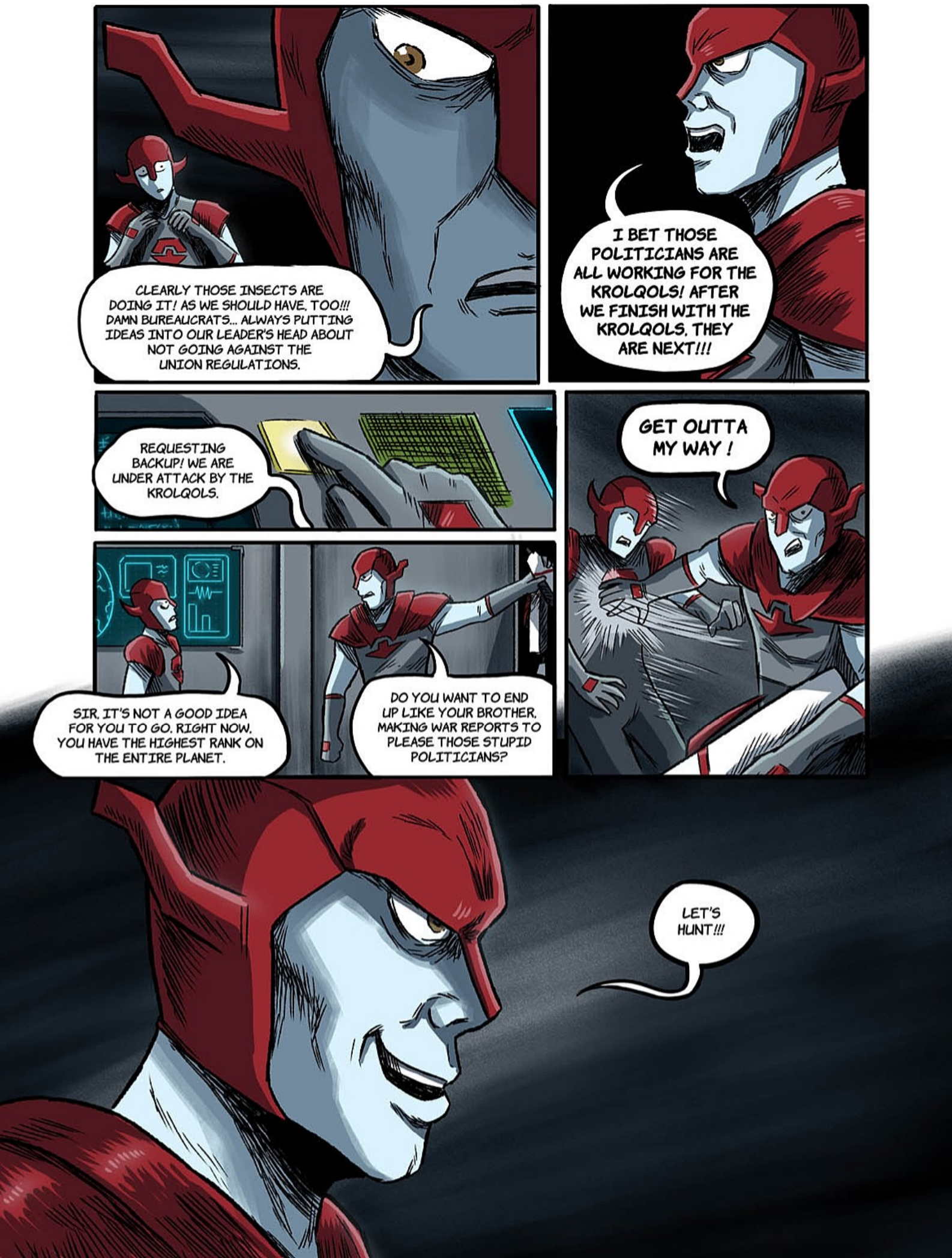

TAKE IT EASY, LITTLE FELLOW.
SORRY... I'M KIND OF NERVOUS.
I WOULD TOO. YOU SURE GOT THE GENERAL'S ATTENTION.
YES... AND NOW I'M GONNA DIE IN A WAR I DIDN'T KNOW WAS HAPPENING.
CHEER UP! IT'S AN HONOR TO SERVE YOUR KIND!
I GUESS...
IT'S JUST... I WAS THIS CLOSE TO FINISHING A GAME I'VE BEEN PLAYING FOR AGES...
DON'T MAKE ME HATE YOU.
SORRY... ANYWAY, WHY DID WE HAVE TO TRAVEL ALL THE WAY HERE? I MEAN, IN NORMAL SPACE... WHY NOT USE A PORTAL? I THOUGHT A PLANET SO IMPORTANT WOULD HAVE ONE.
YOU ARE REALLY CLUELESS, AREN'T YOU?

IT MADE THE NEWS! WE WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE A FUNCTIONAL PORTAL HERE. BUT IT'S STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION. APPARENTLY NOBODY THOUGHT, "OH, HEY, WOULDN'T IT BE NICE TO HAVE A FASTER METHOD TO PROTECT AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE SHOULD A WAR KICK OFF?!"
UH-OH... I HOPE THE KROLQOLS DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT...
DON'T WORRY! THE KROLQOLS DON'T HAVE A CHANCE!
COME ON! WE ARE STRONGER!
MAYBE... BUT THIS CUTE LITTLE FACE OF YOURS DOESN'T FOOL ME!
I WOULDN'T COUNT ON IT.
TAP!
YOU'VE NEVER FOUGHT A KROLQOL, HAVE YOU?
I'M THE FIRST AT MY TRAINING CLASS! I HAVE THE TOP SCORE IN THE SIMULATION CHAMBER!
HA! HA!
HA!
HA! HA!

KROLQOLS ARE NOTHING LIKE YOUR VIDEO GAMES! YOU CAN SEE IN THEIR EYES; THEY DON'T CARE IF THEY LIVE OR DIE... IT'S LIKE THEY ARE DEAD ALREADY. AND YOU CANNOT KILL DEATH, KIDDO...
DON'T LISTEN TO HIM.
WOOSH!

WHOOM!
WOOOOOSH!
WHOOOOM!
WOOSH!
WOOO
BOOOM!

WHAT IS HAPPENING?
CONNECTION LOST
THE KROLQOLS MANAGED TO ENTER THE ATMOSPHERE USING SOME SORT OF CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY.
SINCE WHEN DO THEY HAVE THIS KIND OF TECHNOLOGY?
THEY... UHM... THEY DON'T... I MEAN... THEY CLEARLY HAVE IT... BUT THEIR SCIENCE IS NOT THAT ADVANCED, SIR. OUR TECHNOLOGY IS NOT THAT ADVANCED.
THEY MAY HAVE GOTTEN IT FROM ANOTHER UNIVERSE, BUT... OUR UNIVERSE IS NOT ALLOWED TO TRADE THIS CLASS OF EQUIPMENT.
BLAM!
DO YOU THINK DEALERS FROM FRINGE UNIVERSES CARE ABOUT THOSE KINDS OF EMBARGO?!?!
NO, SIR! I DON'T THINK THEY DO, SIR!


CLEARLY THOSE INSECTS ARE DOING IT! AS WE SHOULD HAVE, TOO!!! DAMN BUREAUCRATS... ALWAYS PUTTING IDEAS INTO OUR LEADER'S HEAD ABOUT NOT GOING AGAINST THE UNION REGULATIONS.
I BET THOSE POLITICIANS ARE ALL WORKING FOR THE KROLQOLS! AFTER WE FINISH WITH THE KROLQOLS, THEY ARE NEXT!!!
REQUESTING BACKUP! WE ARE UNDER ATTACK BY THE KROLQOLS.
GET OUTTA MY WAY !
SIR, IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA FOR YOU TO GO. RIGHT NOW, YOU HAVE THE HIGHEST RANK ON THE ENTIRE PLANET.
DO YOU WANT TO END UP LIKE YOUR BROTHER, MAKING WAR REPORTS TO PLEASE THOSE STUPID POLITICIANS?
LET'S HUNT!!!

WHOOOOMM
CLANG!

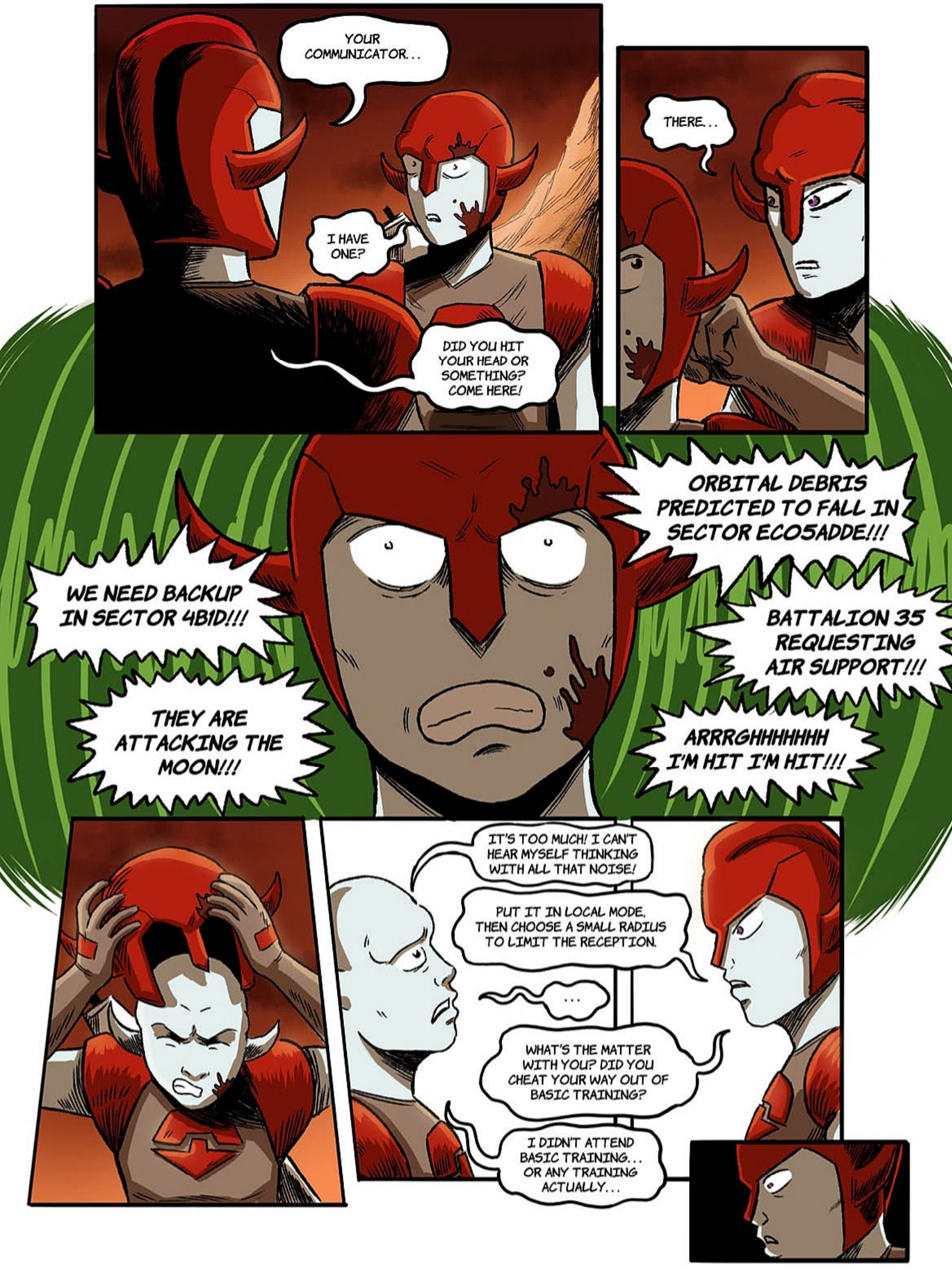
DO SOMETHING!!!
CRUNCH

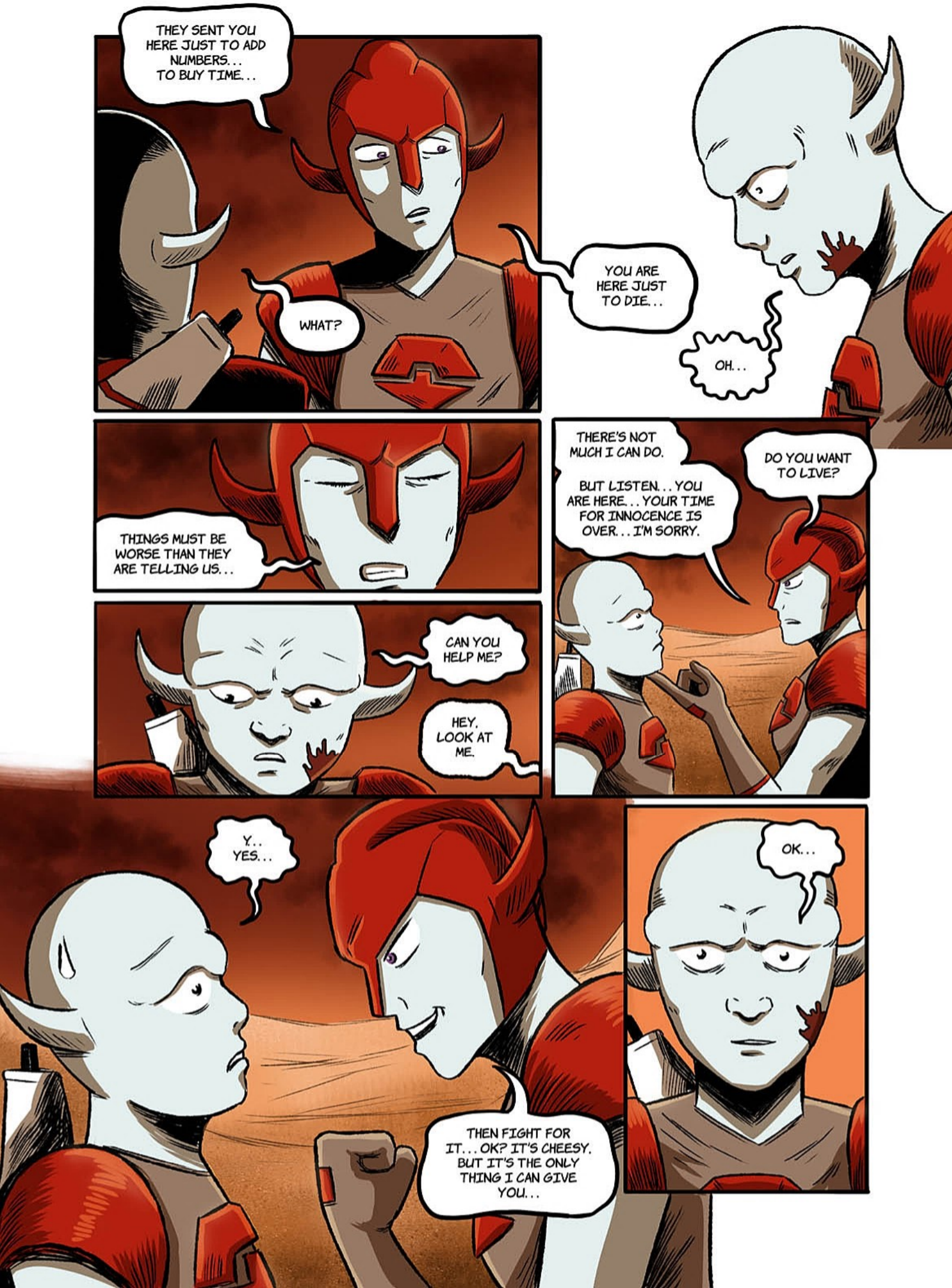
WHOOM
CONGRATULATIONS SOLDIER! YOUR FIRST KROLQOL!!!
THAT'S MINE!

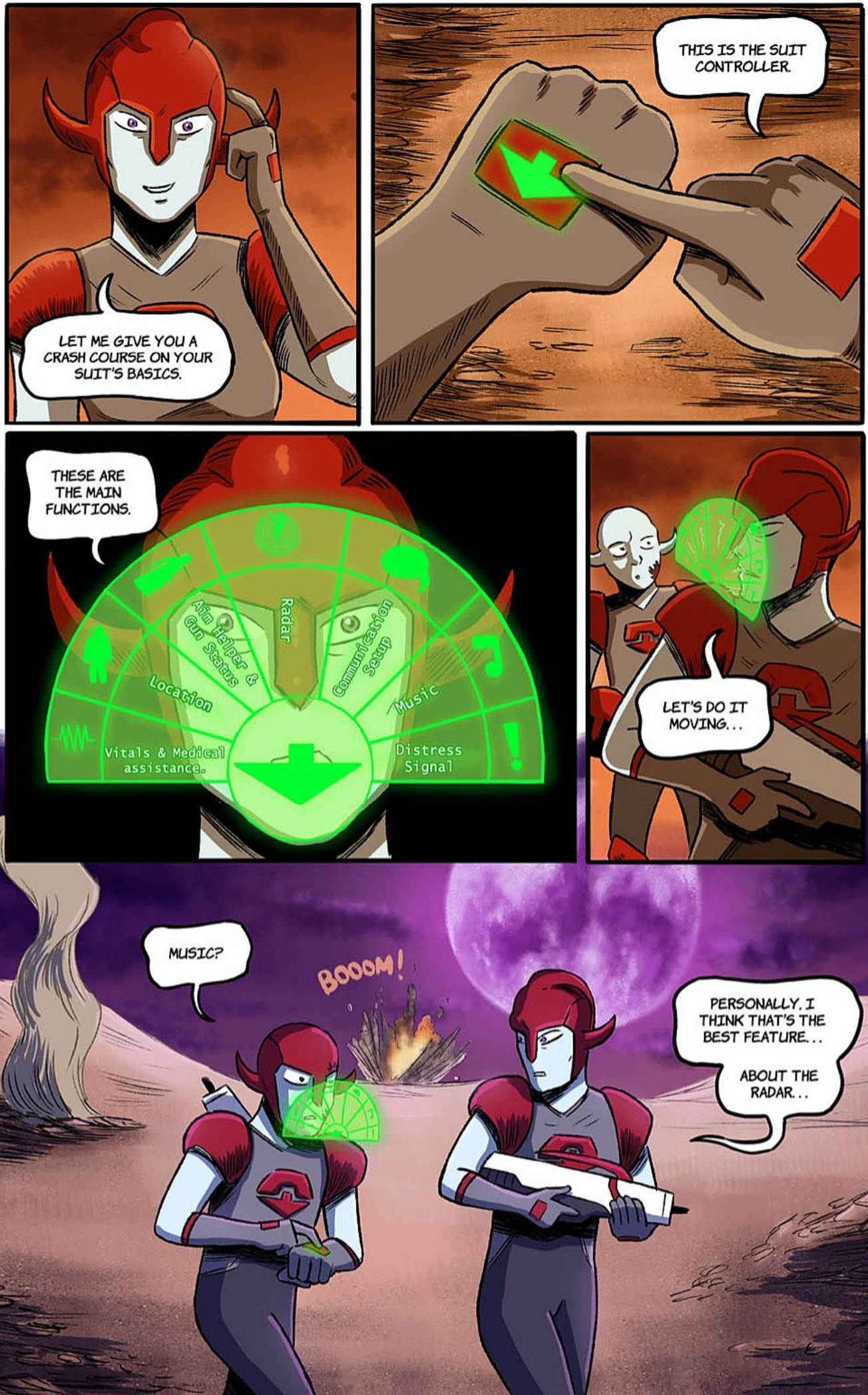
TAKE THIS. HE WILL NOT BE NEEDING IT.
I MARKED HIS POSITION FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION. HE'LL LIVE

DON... DON'T MOVE!
DO IT!!! MURDERER!!!
I'M NOT A MURDERER! YOU ARE THE ONES WHO STARTED THIS WAR!
WE WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU STARTED THIS!
WHOOOM

HEY!
TAP!
SHHHHHH!!!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SFHORRY... IAMH UHST...
WHAT?
LOWER YOUR VOICE! ARE YOU TRYING TO GET US KILLED?
SORR–
SORRY... I'M LOST.
LOST? HOW? AND WHY ARE YOU SCREAMING? USE YOUR COMMUNICATOR!
MY WHAT???


YOUR COMMUNICATOR...
I HAVE ONE?
DID YOU HIT YOUR HEAD OR SOMETHING? COME HERE!
THERE...
ORBITAL DEBRIS PREDICTED TO FALL IN SECTOR ECO5ADDE!!!
WE NEED BACKUP IN SECTOR 4B1D!!!
BATTALION 35 REQUESTING AIR SUPPORT!!!
THEY ARE ATTACKING THE MOON!!!
ARRRGHHHHHHH I'M HIT I'M HIT!!!
IT'S TOO MUCH! I CAN'T HEAR MYSELF THINKING WITH ALL THAT NOISE!
PUT IT IN LOCAL MODE. THEN CHOOSE A SMALL RADIUS TO LIMIT THE RECEPTION.
...
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? DID YOU CHEAT YOUR WAY OUT OF BASIC TRAINING?
I DIDN'T ATTEND BASIC TRAINING... OR ANY TRAINING ACTUALLY...


THEY SENT YOU HERE JUST TO ADD NUMBERS... TO BUY TIME...
WHAT?
YOU ARE HERE JUST TO DIE...
OH...
THINGS MUST BE WORSE THAN THEY ARE TELLING US...
THERE'S NOT MUCH I CAN DO.
BUT LISTEN... YOU ARE HERE... YOUR TIME FOR INNOCENCE IS OVER... I'M SORRY.
DO YOU WANT TO LIVE?
CAN YOU HELP ME?
HEY, LOOK AT ME.
Y.. YES...
THEN FIGHT FOR IT... OK? IT'S CHEESY. BUT IT'S THE ONLY THING I CAN GIVE YOU...
OK...


LET ME GIVE YOU A CRASH COURSE ON YOUR SUIT'S BASICS.
THIS IS THE SUIT CONTROLLER.
THESE ARE THE MAIN FUNCTIONS.
Radar
Aim Helper & Gun Status
Communication Setup
Location
Music
Vitals & Medical assistance.
Distress Signal
LET'S DO IT MOVING...
MUSIC?
BOOOM!
PERSONALLY, I THINK THAT'S THE BEST FEATURE...
ABOUT THE RADAR...

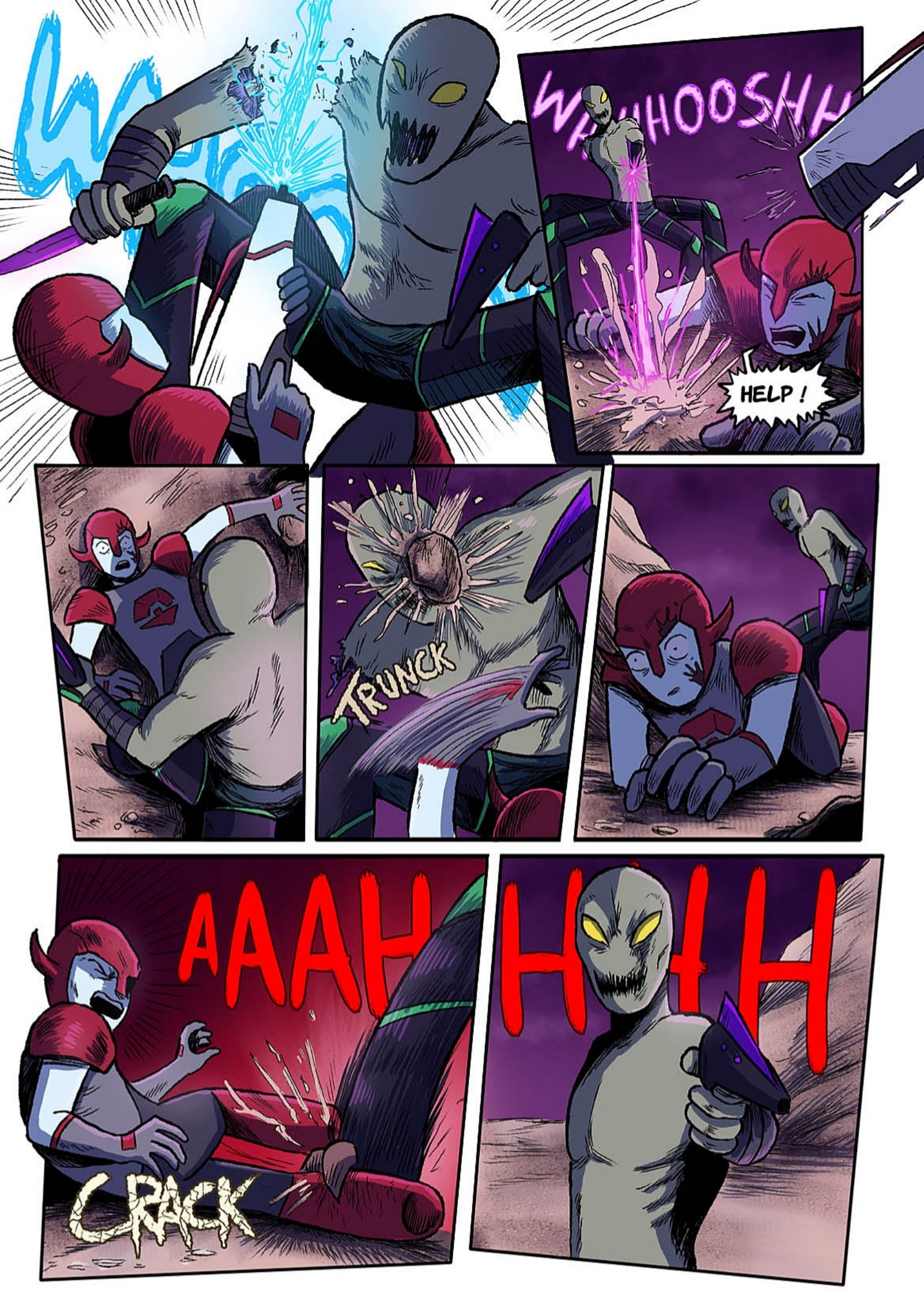
WHAT ABOUT IT?
DON'T COUNT ON IT! THE KROLQOLS ARE USING SOME KIND OF CLOAKING. WHEN THEY SHOW UP IN THE RADAR, IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE.
THE BEST THING TO DO IS TO KEEP YOUR EYES WIDE OPEN! GOT IT?
YES!
LUCKY FOR US, IT APPEARS THEY HAVE TO GET OUT OF THE CLOAKING TO ATTACK.
ATTENTION PLATOON 49! KROLQOLS MOVING TOWARD YOUR POSITION!
PLATOON 49

WOOOSH!
WHOO
WHOO
FINCH!
WOOSH!
WHOOOOM!

BOOM!
TAKE COVER!!!
CLICK!

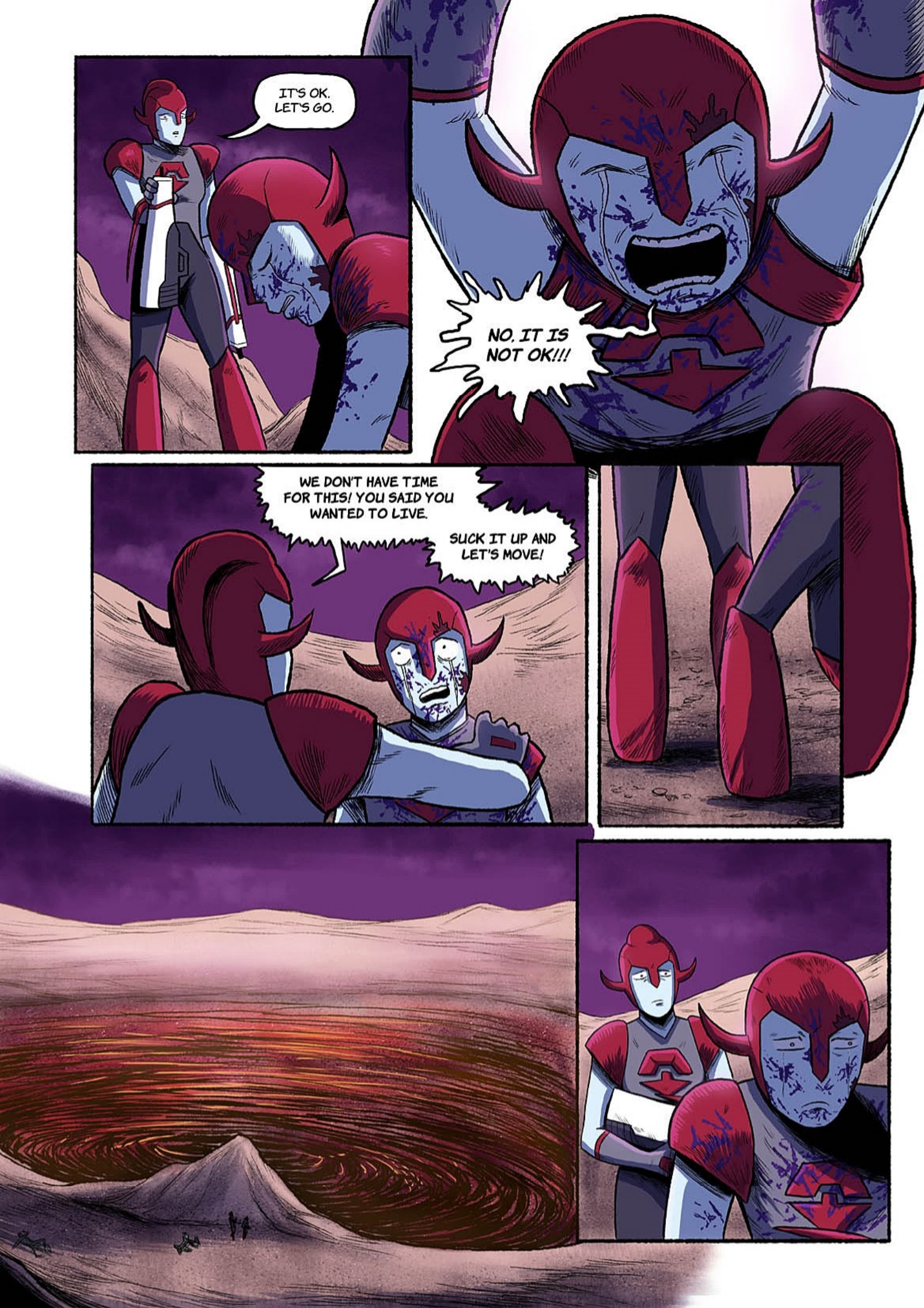
BOOOOOM

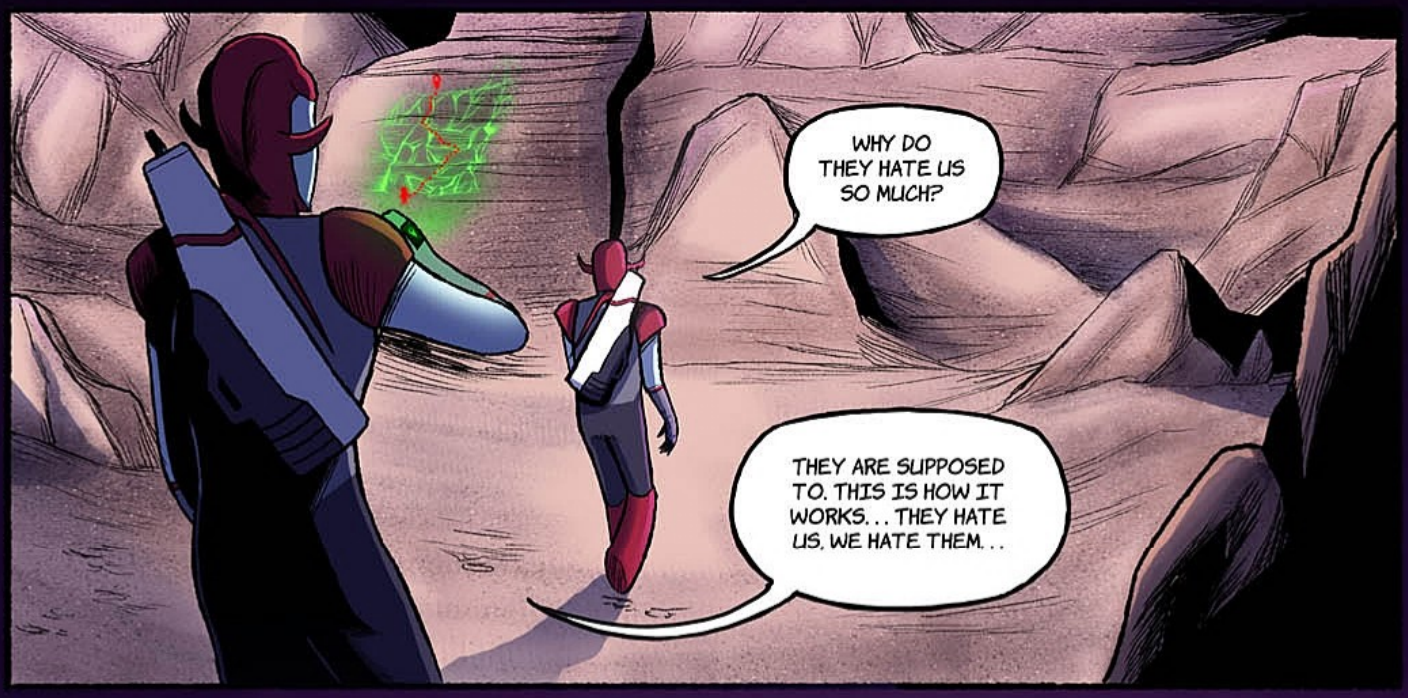
THUMP!
TRUNCK
HELP !
DON'T MOVE !


WHOOSHH
HELP !
TRUNCK
AAAH
CRACK
H+H

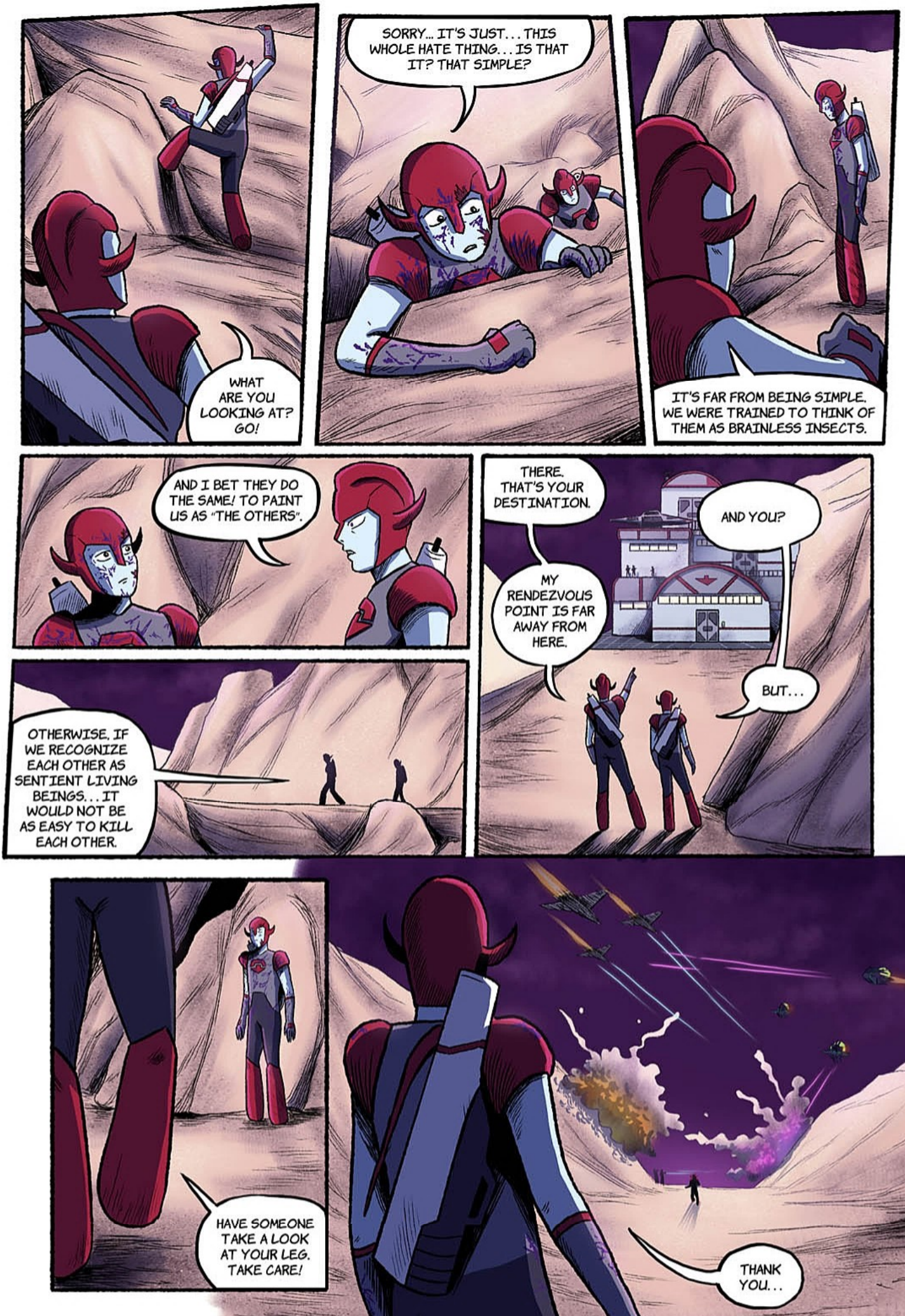
WHOOOOM
FINCK

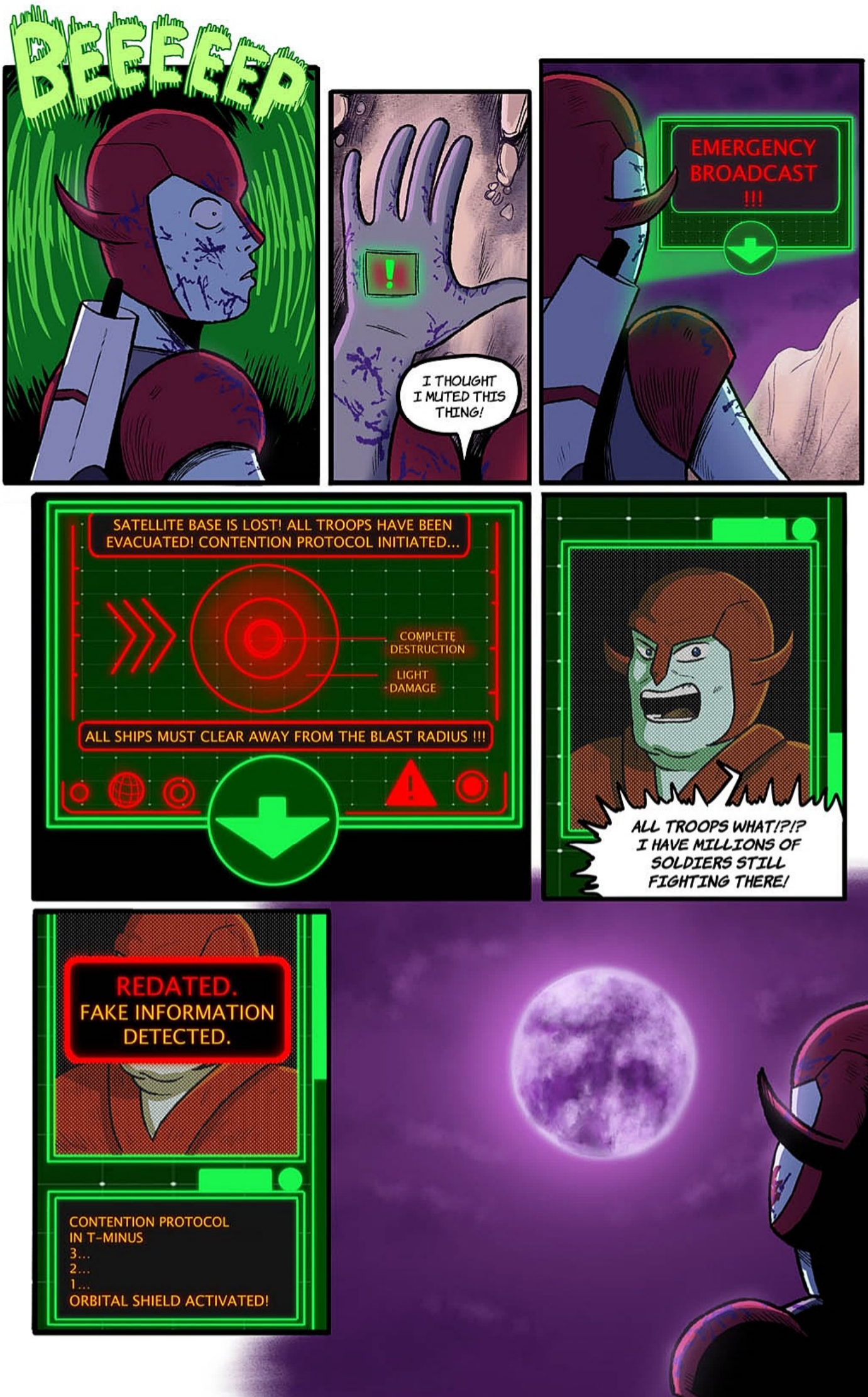
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINCK!
FINC-
ENOUGH!

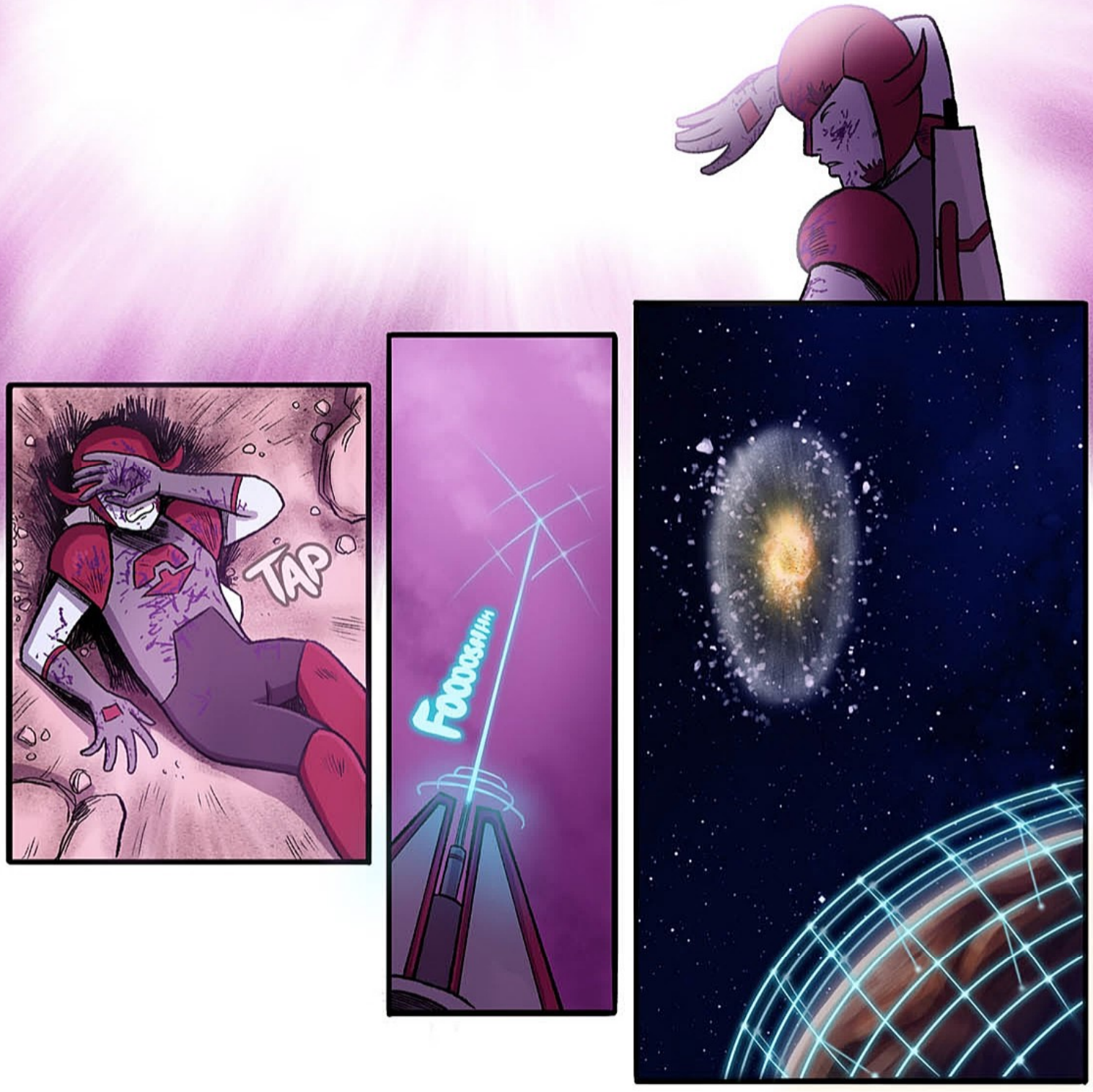

IT'S OK. LET'S GO.
NO. IT IS NOT OK!!!
WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS! YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO LIVE.
SUCK IT UP AND LET'S MOVE!


WHY DO THEY HATE US SO MUCH?
THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO. THIS IS HOW IT WORKS... THEY HATE US, WE HATE THEM...

BOOOM
THAT WAY. UP THE HILL.


WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT? GO!
SORRY... IT'S JUST... THIS WHOLE HATE THING... IS THAT IT? THAT SIMPLE?
IT'S FAR FROM BEING SIMPLE. WE WERE TRAINED TO THINK OF THEM AS BRAINLESS INSECTS.
AND I BET THEY DO THE SAME! TO PAINT US AS "THE OTHERS".
THERE. THAT'S YOUR DESTINATION.
AND YOU?
MY RENDEZVOUS POINT IS FAR AWAY FROM HERE.
BUT...
OTHERWISE, IF WE RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER AS SENTIENT LIVING BEINGS... IT WOULD NOT BE AS EASY TO KILL EACH OTHER.
HAVE SOMEONE TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR LEG. TAKE CARE!
THANK YOU...

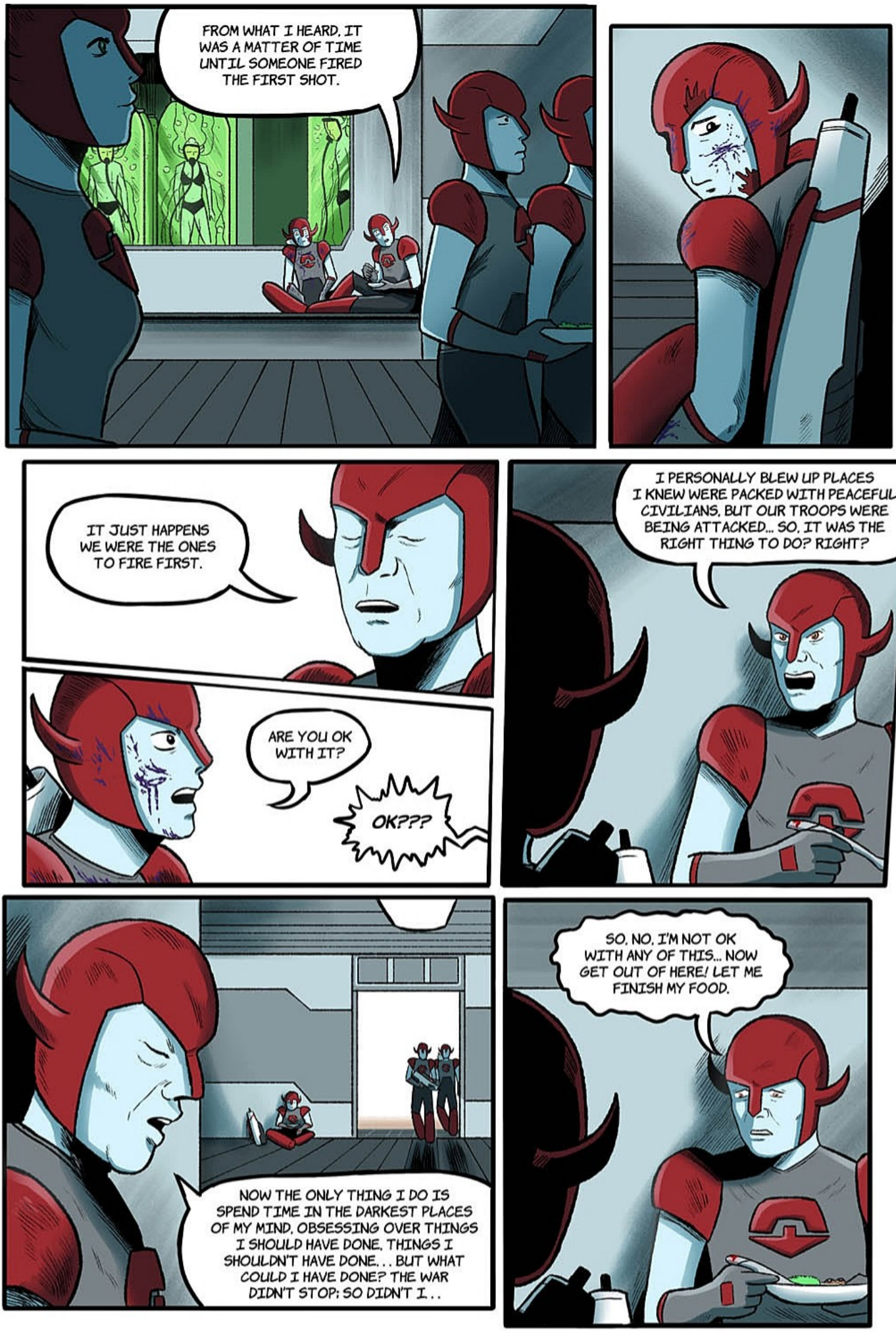

BEEEEEP
I THOUGHT I MUTED THIS THING!
EMERGENCY BROADCAST !!!
SATELLITE BASE IS LOST! ALL TROOPS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED! CONTENTION PROTOCOL INITIATED...
COMPLETE DESTRUCTION
LIGHT DAMAGE
ALL SHIPS MUST CLEAR AWAY FROM THE BLAST RADIUS !!!
ALL TROOPS WHAT!?!? I HAVE MILLIONS OF SOLDIERS STILL FIGHTING THERE!
REDATED. FAKE INFORMATION DETECTED.
CONTENTION PROTOCOL IN T-MINUS 3... 2... 1... ORBITAL SHIELD ACTIVATED!


TAP
FOOOOSHHH

HEY. ARE YOU HURT?
COME ON! GET INSIDE THE BASE: THE SHIELD IS NOT INFALLIBLE!
. . .
POOR BASTARD. . .
GET INSIDE THAT BASE!!!

HI.
HI.
WHO STARTED THIS WAR?
REALLY?
HEY, MEDICS! THIS ONE HERE NEEDS A HEAD SCAN!
DON'T DO THAT. I'M SERIOUS!
OK... SURE... SO YOU ARE A SPY, THEN. LOOKING TO PUNISH INFIDELS OR WHATEVER?
A SPY?!?! I'M BARELY A SOLDIER...
WELL, ON THAT WE AGREE.

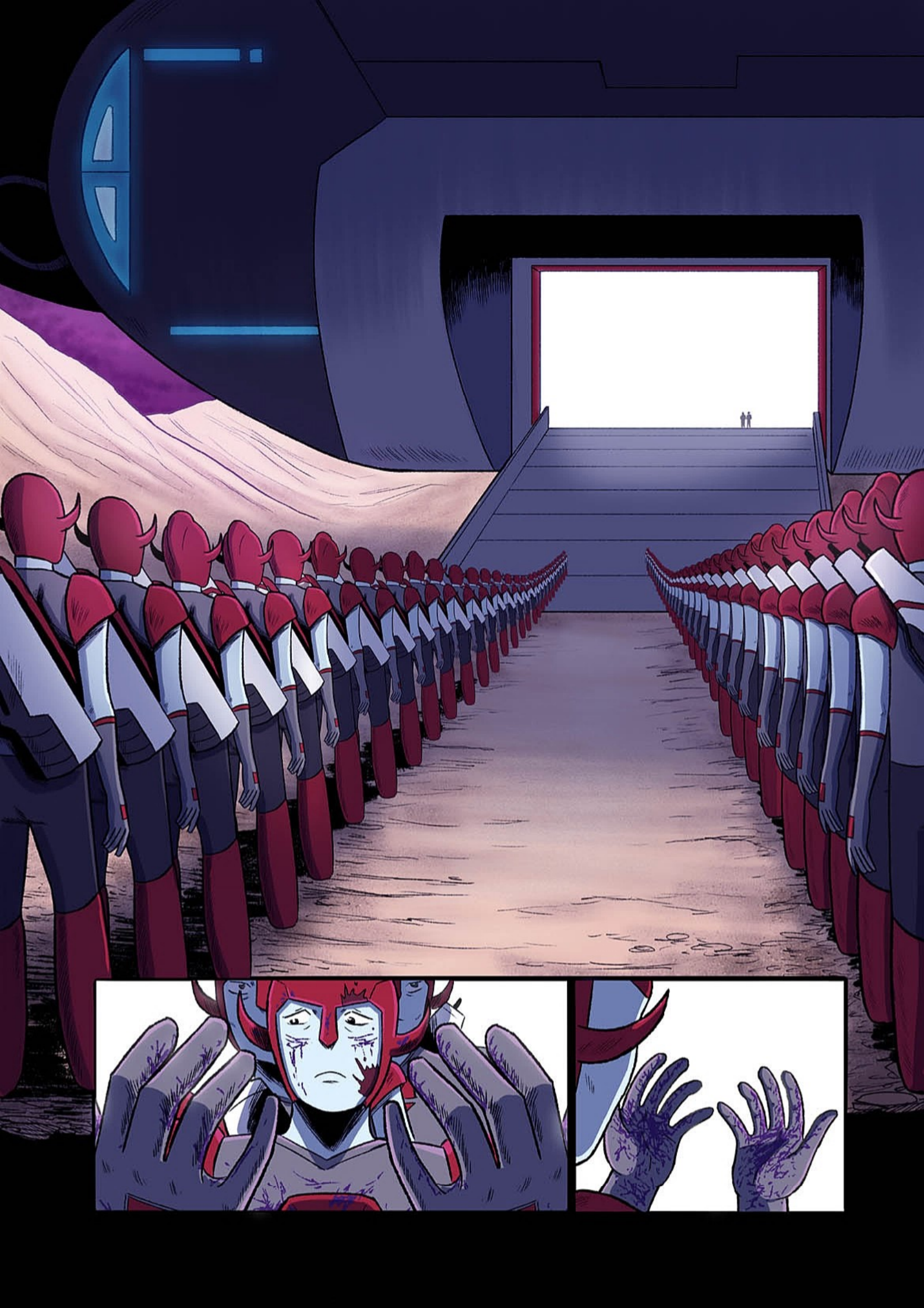
OK, LET'S PLAY YOUR GAME. I'M SICK OF ALL OF THIS ANYWAY.
WE STARTED THE WAR.
HAPPY?
NOW, GO AND TELL THE INSPECTOR GENERAL I'M A TRAITOR.
I'M NOT...
WE STARTED THE WAR...
WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT DID WE DO?
I DON'T KNOW HOW, OR WHY, IT BEGAN. BUT I WAS IN THE FIRST WAVES OF STRIKES AGAINST KROLQOL TARGETS. THEY DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE. I MEAN, THEY SURELY IMAGINED IT COULD HAPPEN, BUT MORE AS AN ABSTRACT FEAR THAN AN EXPECTATION.
SO, WE NOT ONLY STARTED IT, IT'S ALSO OUR FAULT?

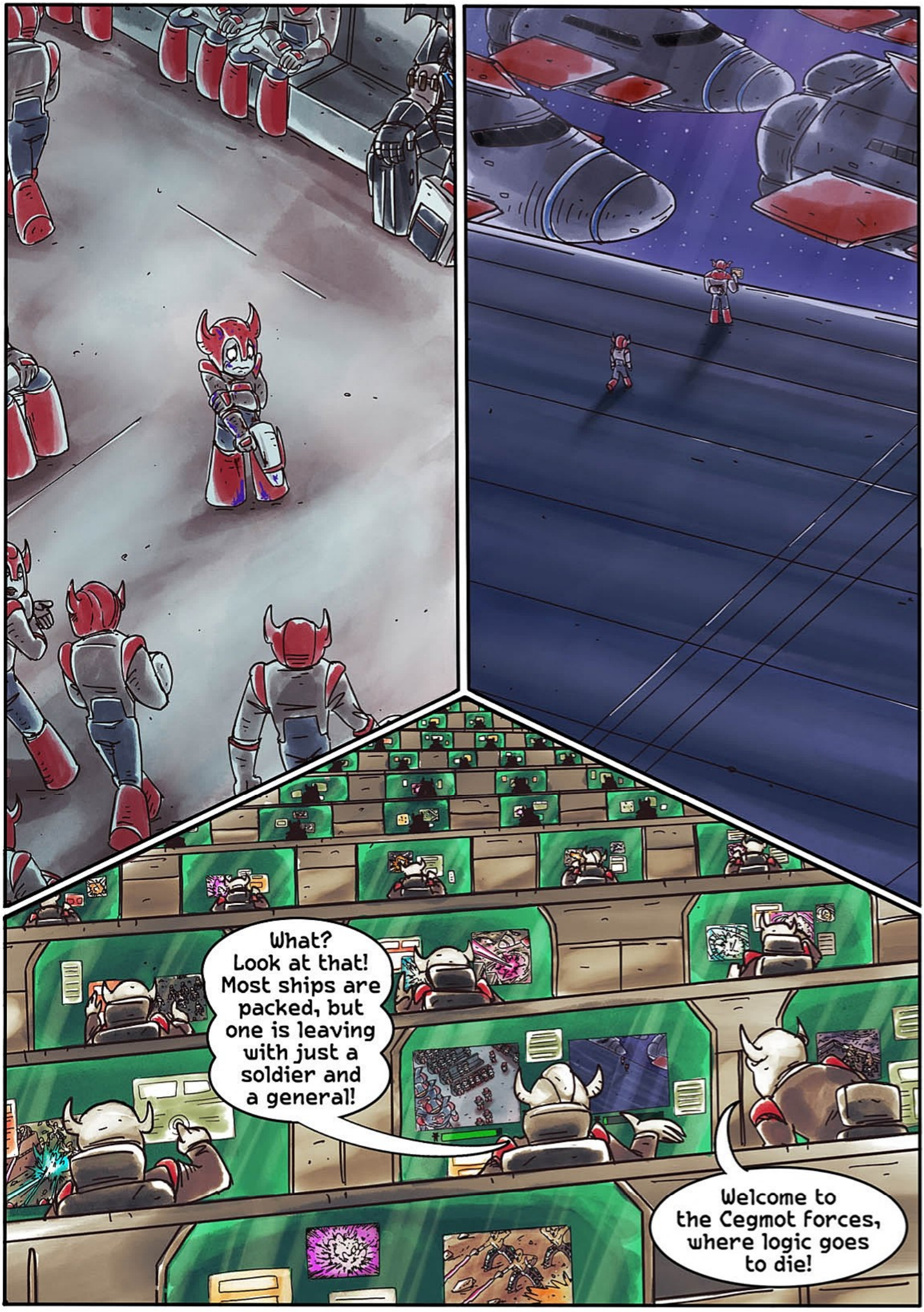

FROM WHAT I HEARD, IT WAS A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL SOMEONE FIRED THE FIRST SHOT.
IT JUST HAPPENS WE WERE THE ONES TO FIRE FIRST.
ARE YOU OK WITH IT?
OK???
I PERSONALLY BLEW UP PLACES I KNEW WERE PACKED WITH PEACEFUL CIVILIANS, BUT OUR TROOPS WERE BEING ATTACKED... SO, IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO? RIGHT?
NOW THE ONLY THING I DO IS SPEND TIME IN THE DARKEST PLACES OF MY MIND, OBSESSING OVER THINGS I SHOULD HAVE DONE, THINGS I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE... BUT WHAT COULD I HAVE DONE? THE WAR DIDN'T STOP; SO DIDN'T I...
SO, NO, I'M NOT OK WITH ANY OF THIS... NOW GET OUT OF HERE! LET ME FINISH MY FOOD.

GET UP! THE WAR IS NOT OVER! YOU CAN REST WHEN YOU DIE!
THOSE SOLDIERS WERE NOT EVALUATED YET. THEY MIGHT NEED MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.
NONSENSE! IF THEY CAN EAT. THEY CAN FIGHT!
THERE YOU ARE!
THAT ONE COMES WITH ME! GET HIM READY. HURRY UP!
NOMIA 331X! I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE DEAD BY NOW!
THE DOCTOR WILL EVALUATE YOU NOW.

RELAX, WE JUST NEED TO FIX YOUR LEG.
NOW, TAKE A DEEP BREATH.
OUCH!!!
DON'T BE LIKE THAT!
IT HURTS!
DOES IT? TELL THAT TO HIM!

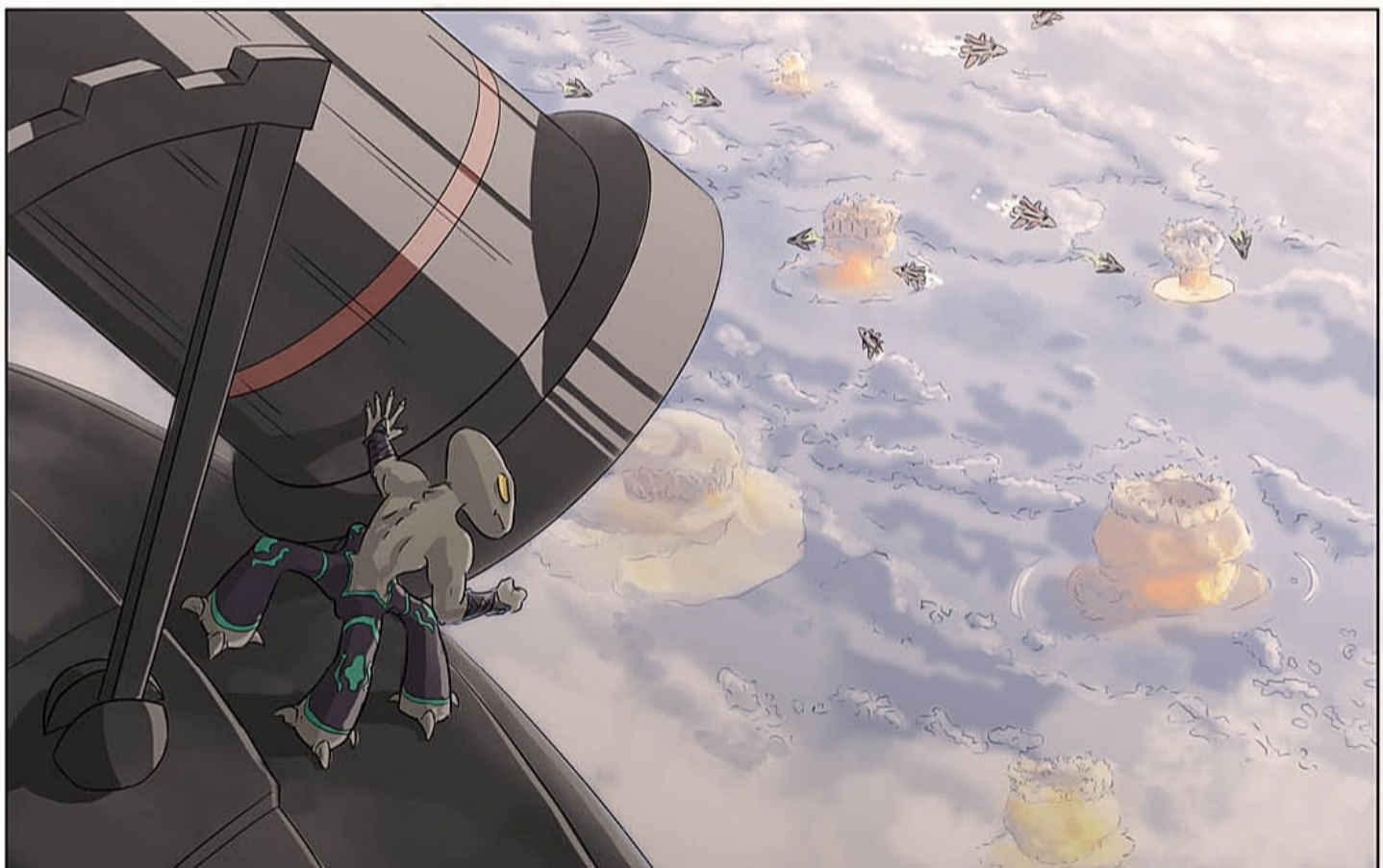
IS HE OK?
AS GOOD AS NEW!
GET YOUR THINGS READY. YOU ARE GOING TO THE MAIN HQ
IS THE WAR OVER, MA'AM?
NO, SOLDIER. THE KROLQOLS JUST LEFT THIS SECTOR. BUT THEY ARE GOING HARD ON THE HQ
MA'AM...
YES, SOLDIER?
I- I UHM... I MISS MY MOM. CAN I... CAN I CALL HER?




What? Look at that! Most ships are packed, but one is leaving with just a soldier and a general!
Welcome to the Cegmot forces, where logic goes to die!

SHUT DOWN ALL COMMUNICATIONS!
THIS EVENT WILL BE REPORTED TO HQ
DO YOU WANT TO PROCEED?
I DON'T CARE!
DO IT!
CERQRAX, FROM PLANET THORA 05P.
YOU SAVED MY LIFE. FOR THAT, I'M GIVING YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO RESTORE GLORY TO OUR RACE!
DON'T MAKE ME REGRET PULLING YOU OUT OF THE INFIRMARY.
DEVICE STATUS: LOADING

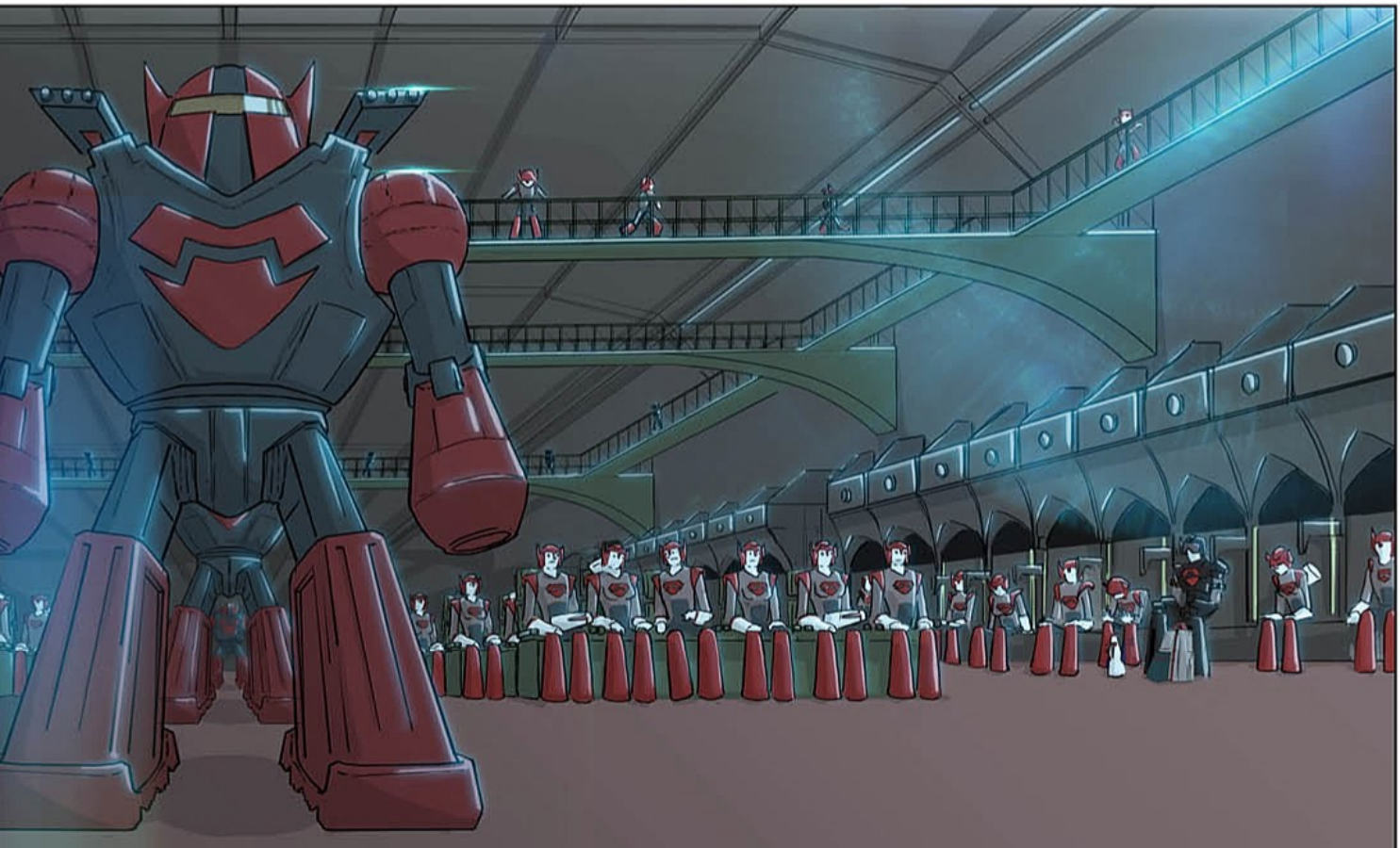
ZAP!!!



!!!
CONNECTION LOST
WE LOST CONNECTION WITH A SHIP IN DEROKS 5!

THE KROLQOLS?
NO, SIR.
THE COMMANDER CUT OFF COMMUNICATIONS AND BROKE FORMATION.
HIS DESTINATION IS UNKNOWN.
WE NEED ALL THE SHIPS HERE!
WE CANNOT WITHSTAND MUCH LONGER WITHOUT REINFORCEMENTS!
DID YOU SEND THE MESSAGE ABOUT THE TRAGIC DEATH OF OUR LEADER?
YES, SIR, ALL OUR FLEET RECEIVED IT.
HE'S PROBABLY A COWARD PLANNING TO SURRENDER! OVERTAKE THE SHIP'S CONTROL AND OPEN UP ITS COMMUNICATIONS!
HE LOCKED THE SYSTEM!
SIR.
I KNOW THE COMMANDER OF THAT SHIP. HE IS NOT PLEASANT TO BE AROUND, BUT HE'S DEFINITELY NOT A COWARD.
HE WOULD NEVER SURRENDER. HE'S UP TO SOMETHING.

DEROKS 5'S FLEET IS ARRIVING.
ABOUT TIME!

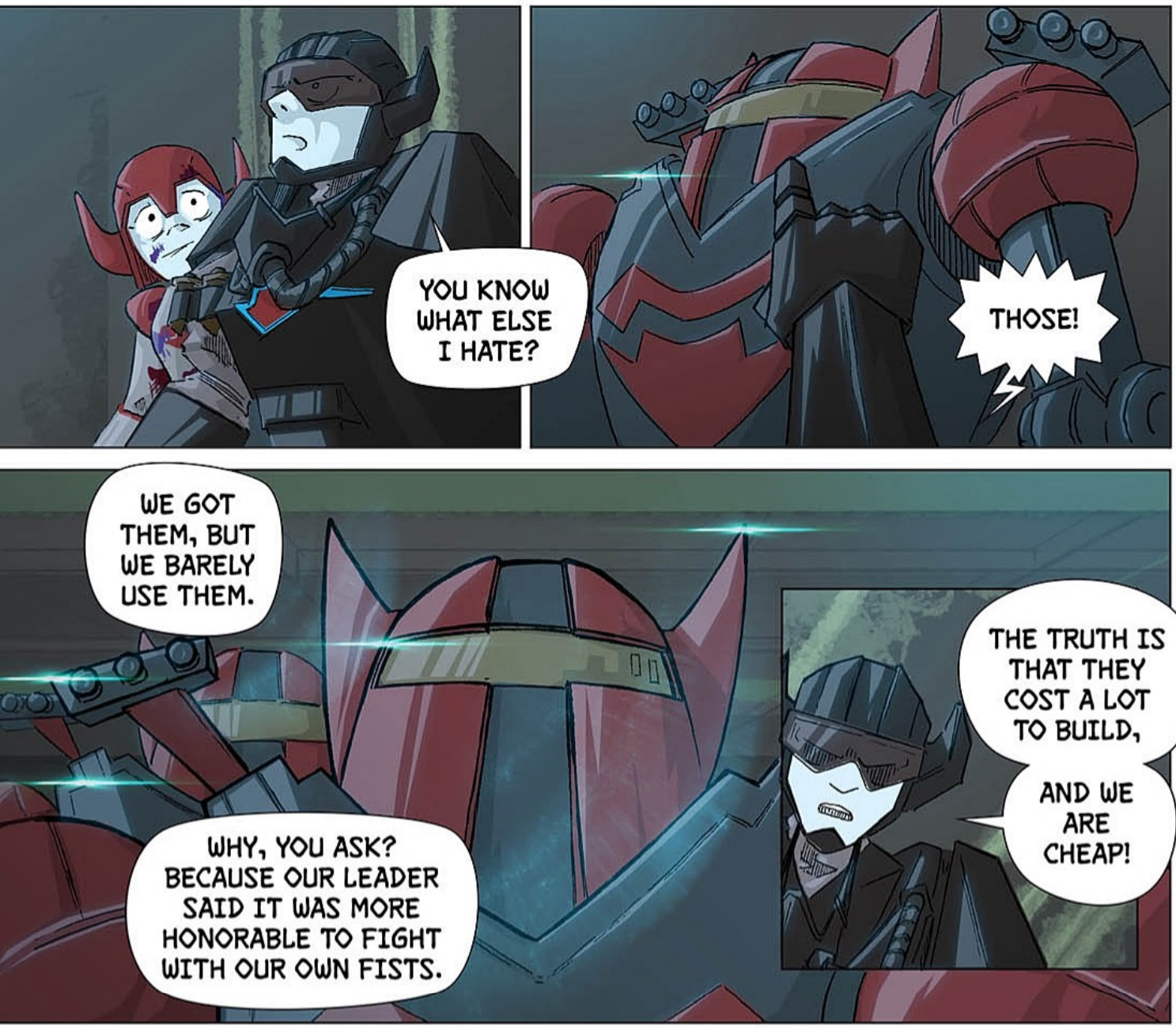


WHAT'S THE MATTER, KID?!
I'M JUST NERVOUS.
IT MAKES YOU LOOK WEAK!
JUST KIDDING. YOU SHOULD BE AFRAID!
I OUGHT TO BE, TOO. BUT THEY MADE ME INCAPABLE OF EXPERIENCING IT.
I WISH I COULD BE LIKE THAT.
NO, YOU DON'T.
WHAT ARE YOU?
EXTREMOPHILE UNIT!

I SEE SO FEW OF YOU HERE.
WE ARE THE ONLY SURVIVORS OF THIS SECTOR.
I'M SORRY.
YOU LOOK WELL PREPARED COMPARED TO ME.
WE ARE NOT PREPARED FOR THEIR NEW WEAPONS.
DON'T BE FOOLED.
THAT'S HOW OUR ANCESTORS DRESSED FOR WAR.
THE ACTUAL SHIELDING COMES FROM A PROTECTIVE LAYER IT GENERATES.
LET ME SHOW YOU SOMETHING!
THIS IS AN OLD KROLQOL CEREMONIAL KNIFE.
I'M COLLECTING THEM.

HA HA HA!
YOUR VEST DESTROYS ANY KROLQOL WEAPON.
BUT... I HAVE FOUGHT A KROLQOL. I WAS HURT PRETTY BADLY.
THEY ARE USING NEW TECHNOLOGY.
IF WE KNOW THAT, WHY DON'T WE CHANGE THE SHIELD!?
WE ARE. BUT TO RESUPPLY ALL THE UNITS THROUGHOUT THE COSMOS, IT TAKES TIME. EVERYONE KNOWS THE KROLQOLS ARE DOING BUSINESS OUTSIDE OF THIS UNIVERSE. OUR LEADER CHOSE NOT TO BELIEVE IT, INSISTING THAT WE WERE SUPERIOR NO MATTER WHAT.
I'M GLAD HE'S DEAD!

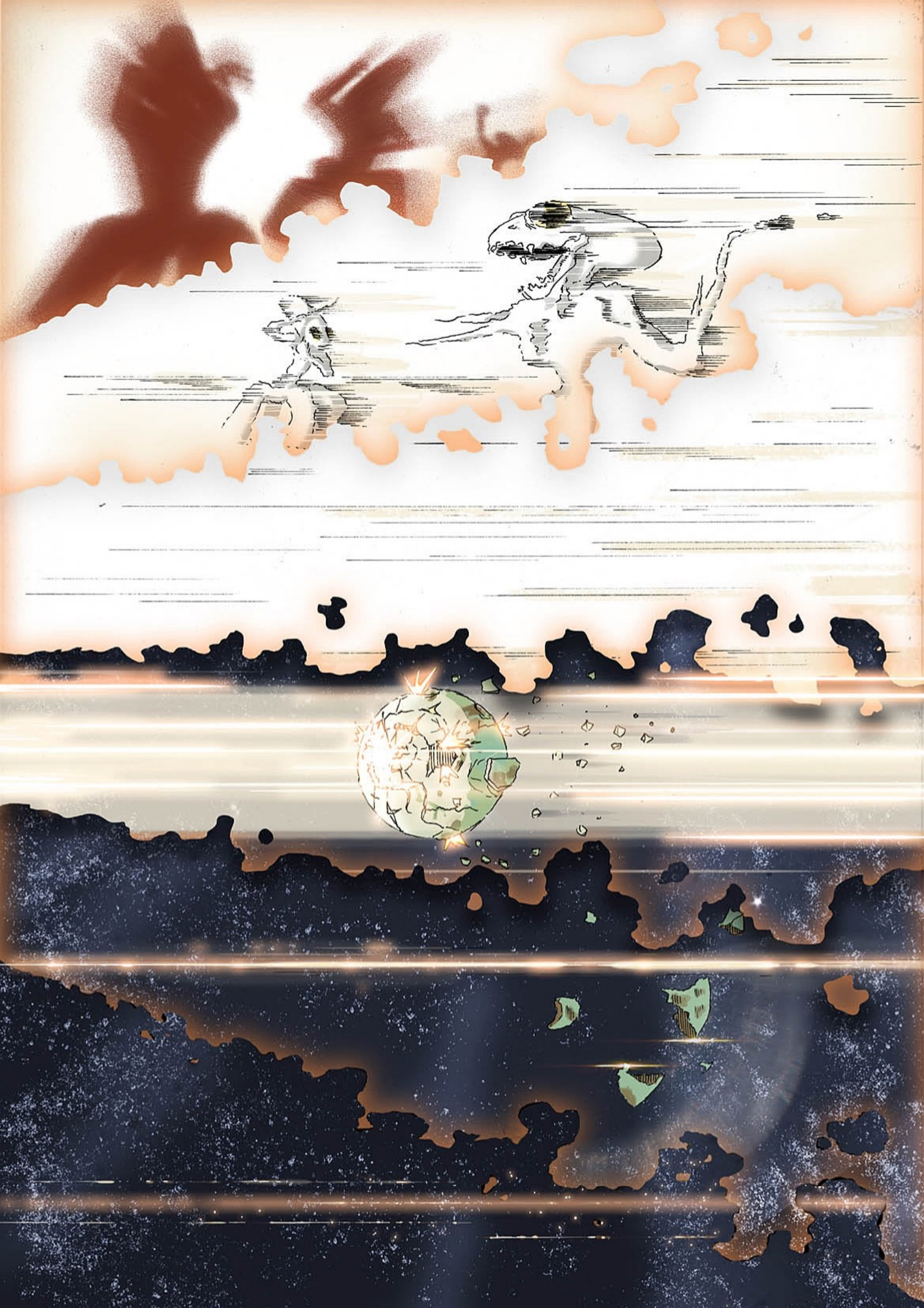
OUR LEADER... IS... DEAD?
THEY DIDN'T TELL YOU, RIGHT?!
THEY DON'T TELL YOU THE TRUTH!
GET LOST!
YOU WANNA KNOW WHY I'M HAPPY HE'S DEAD?
I—
THERE IS AN INTERUNIVERSAL GATE IN THE HQ.
WHILE THE KROLQOLS WERE BUYING WEAPONS, OUR LEADER WAS BUYING A WAY OUT! MAYBE HE'S NOT EVEN DEAD; HE JUST FLED!


YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE I HATE?
THOSE!
WE GOT THEM, BUT WE BARELY USE THEM.
WHY, YOU ASK? BECAUSE OUR LEADER SAID IT WAS MORE HONORABLE TO FIGHT WITH OUR OWN FISTS.
THE TRUTH IS THAT THEY COST A LOT TO BUILD,
AND WE ARE CHEAP!

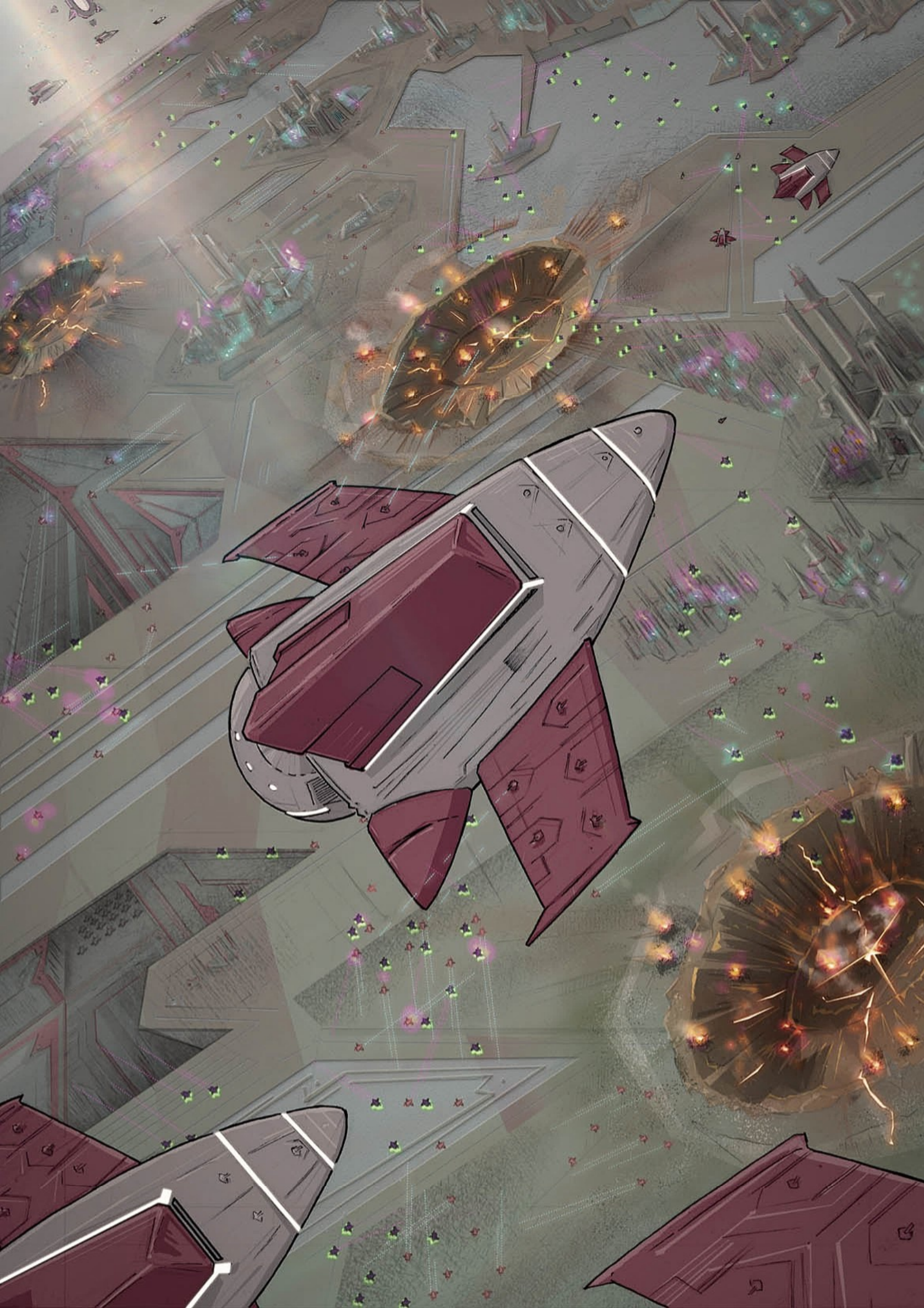
A GIFT FROM NATURE TO THE WAR EFFORTS, IF YOU WILL.

RAISE YOUR HEAD, KID!
TELL ME, WHERE ARE YOU FROM?
NOMIA 331X
NOMIA 331X...
WELL, I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND A NEW PLACE TO LIVE.
WHY WOULD I WANT TO FIND–
OH...
I SEE.
AND IT'S ALL OUR FAULT. THE WAR...
EVERYTHING.
OH YEAH, BIG TIME!
HAVE A LOOK.
HIGHLY ILLEGAL MATERIAL!
BUT, WHO CARES?

WE TURNED STARS INTO WEAPONS.
GATHERED THEIR LIGHT AND FOCUSED ITS POWER.
LIGHT.
CUTTING THROUGH THE VOID.
DESTINED TO OBLITERATE WHAT THE LIGHT OF ANOTHER STAR NURTURED FOR SO LONG.
A LIGHT SO BRIGHT, IT LEAVES ONLY DARKNESS BEHIND.

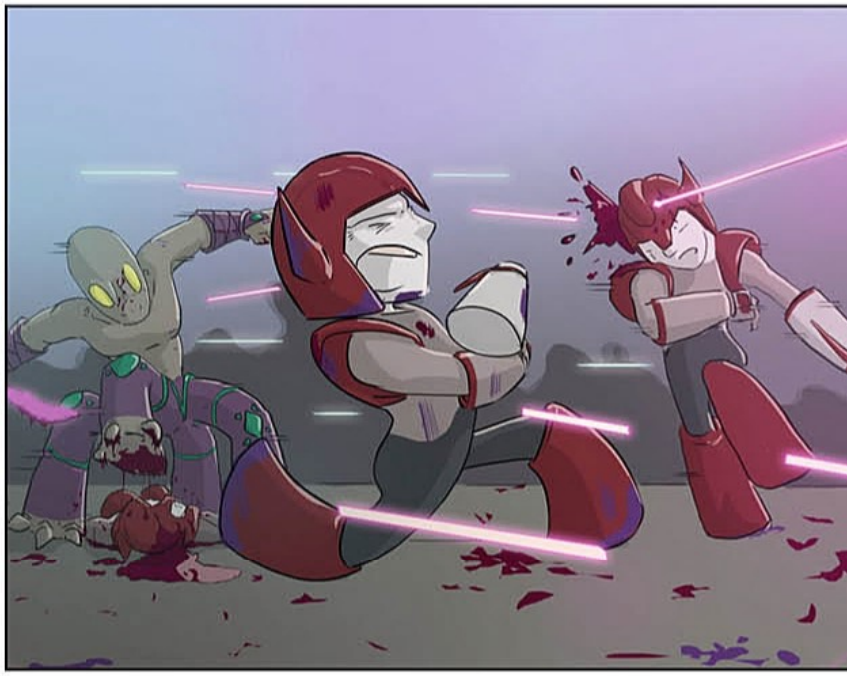


YEAH...
THAT DIDN'T WORK FOR LONG.
AFTER WE TOOK SOME PLANETS, THE KROLQOLS STARTED PUTTING REFLECTORS TO INTERCEPT THE BEAMS.
SOON ENOUGH, THEY WERE MOVING PLANETS AROUND, COMPLETELY INVALIDATING OUR TRAJECTORY PREDICTIONS.
FROM THIS POINT ONWARD, WE HAD TO GO AND HAVE OUR HANDS DIRTY.
THE THING IS, WE USED THE KROLQOLS FOR CHEAP MANUFACTURING FOR AGES.
THEIR TECHNOLOGY WAS BETTER THAN OURS, AND NOW ALL OF THEM HATE OUR GUTS.
LOOKING BACK NOW, IT'S EASY TO SEE IT WAS A HUGE MISTAKE.
BUT TO PREDICT THE FUTURE OF THE PAST IS EASY!
ARRIVING
WE GET CLEARANCE TO LAND.
GET READY, KID!

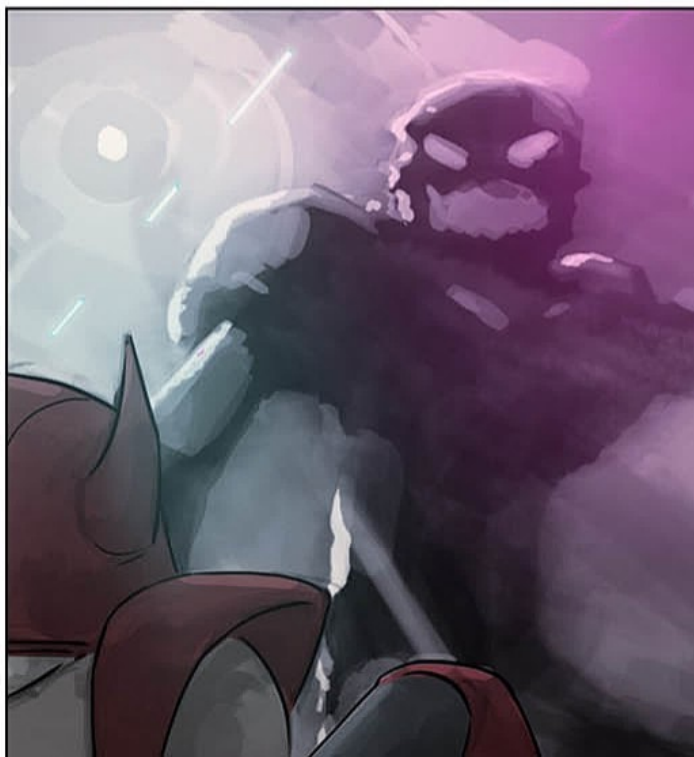


WELCOME TO BASE PRIME, SOLDIERS!
AND THE EVEN GREATER HONOR TO FIGHT AND DIE ON THESE GROUNDS!
YOU'LL HAVE THE HONOR TO STAND ON THE SAME GROUNDS WHERE OUR GREAT LEADER WALKED.

MOVE! OR
YOU'RE TOAST!



THUMP!!!



OPEN YOUR EYES, SOLDIER!
TAKE COVER OVER THERE!
YES, MA'AM!
HE'S YOUNGER THAN MY SON.
TRY NOT TO DIE...

BLAM!!

SHOOT

DON'T WORRY,
IT'S DEAD.

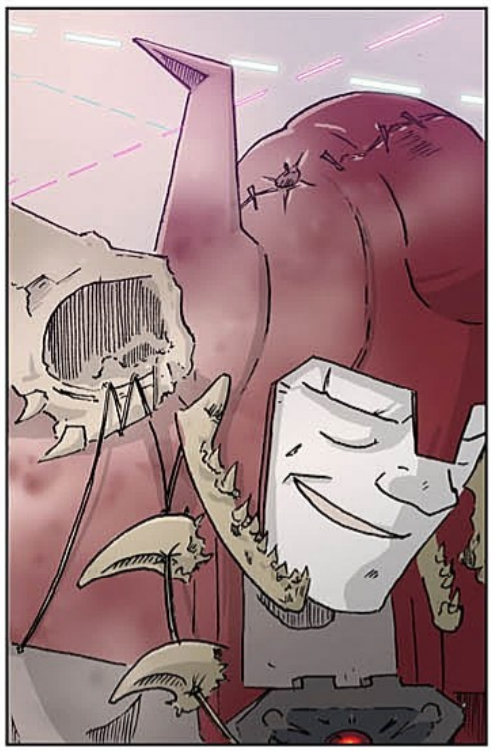
WE DETONATED A TRAKIKS BOMB.
THE AIR IS FILLED WITH KILLER NANOBOTS.
HAUMPH!
HAHAHA!
DON'T BE STUPID; THEY ONLY HURT THE KROLQOLS!
YES, IT'S OK. YOU CAN BREATHE.
THEY ACTUALLY HAVE A LOVELY SMELL.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HEY... IT'S OK...
DON'T BE SUCH A LIAR! TODAY IS OUR LAST DAY!
WE ONLY MADE IT THIS FAR BECAUSE, UNLIKE US, THE KROLQOLS ARE NOT INTO EXPLODING PLANETS!
THEY HAVE RESPECT FOR NATURE!
WE ARE THE ONLY ONES BLOWING UP STARS, PLANETS, MOONS, AND WHATNOT.
LIKE WE ARE SOME KIND OF DRUNK GODS!

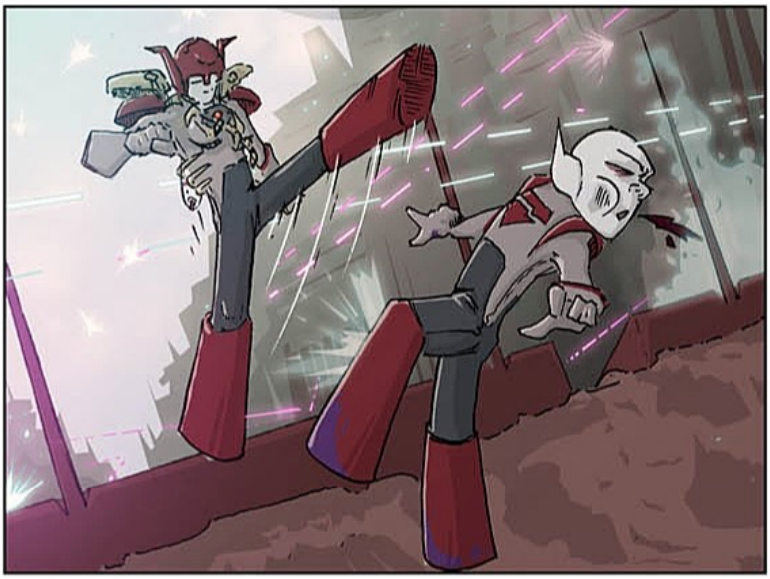
LOOK AT ME!
KLANG!!!
HE IS LYING TO YOU!
NOTHING WILL BE OKAY, EVEN IF YOU SURVIVE...
YOU'LL BE DAMAGED FOR GOOD!
ALL THANKS TO THAT GOOD FOR NOTHING YOU CALL "LEADER".
DON'T TALK ABOUT OUR LEADER THAT WAY!
HE DIED IN BATTLE, FIGHTING FOR US!
WITH US!
WHAT'S MY PROBLEM?!
HE!
HE IS MY PROBLEM!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?
I SHOULD REPORT YOU FOR SAYING SUCH AN ATROCIOUS THING!

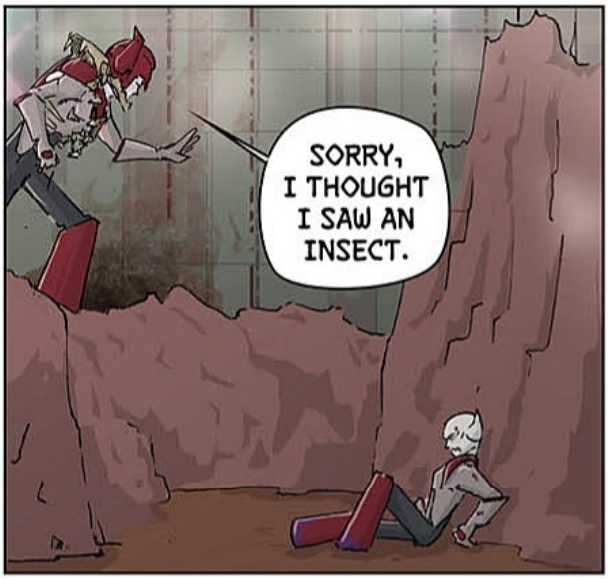
LOOK AROUND!
KIDS, OLD AND CRIPPLES...
IF WE ARE RELYING ON CHILDREN TO FIGHT THE WAR, WE HAVE ALREADY LOST.

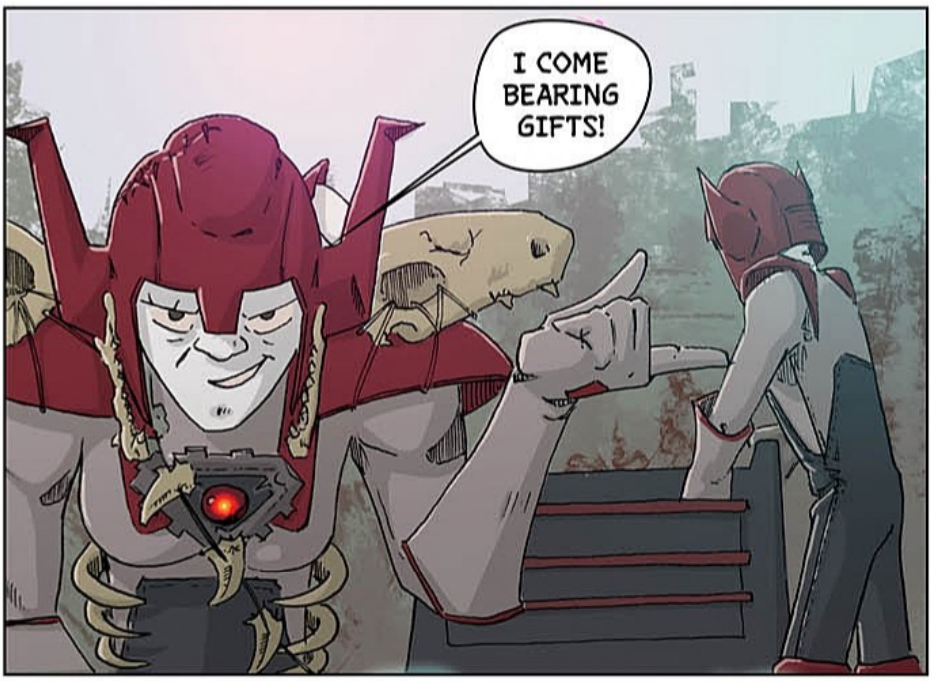
CLAP...
CLAP...
CLAP...
CLAP...

BRAVO! I'M REALLY MOVED BY YOUR SPEECH, SOLDIER.
THANK YOU, OH MIGHTY GENERAL!

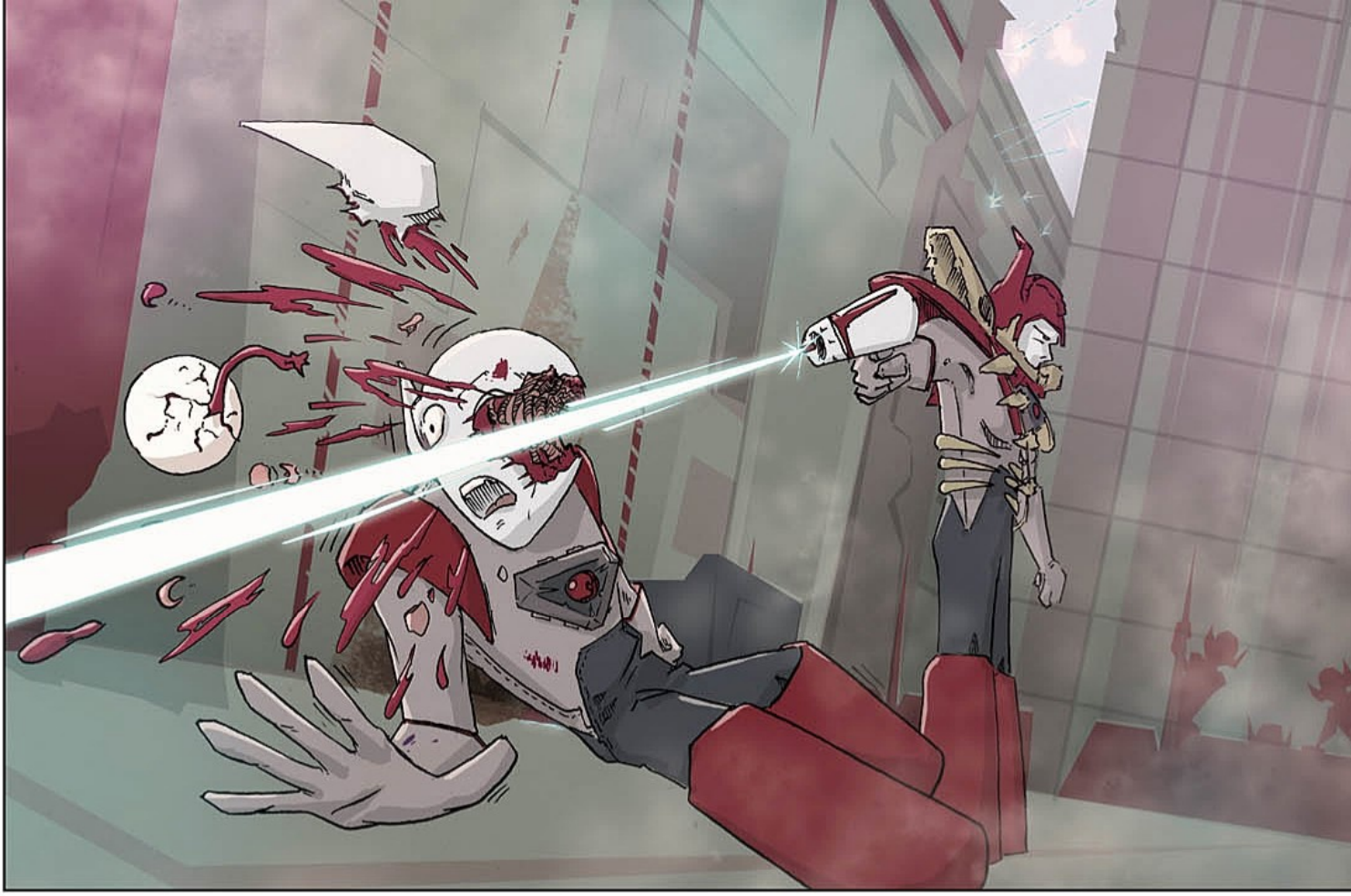


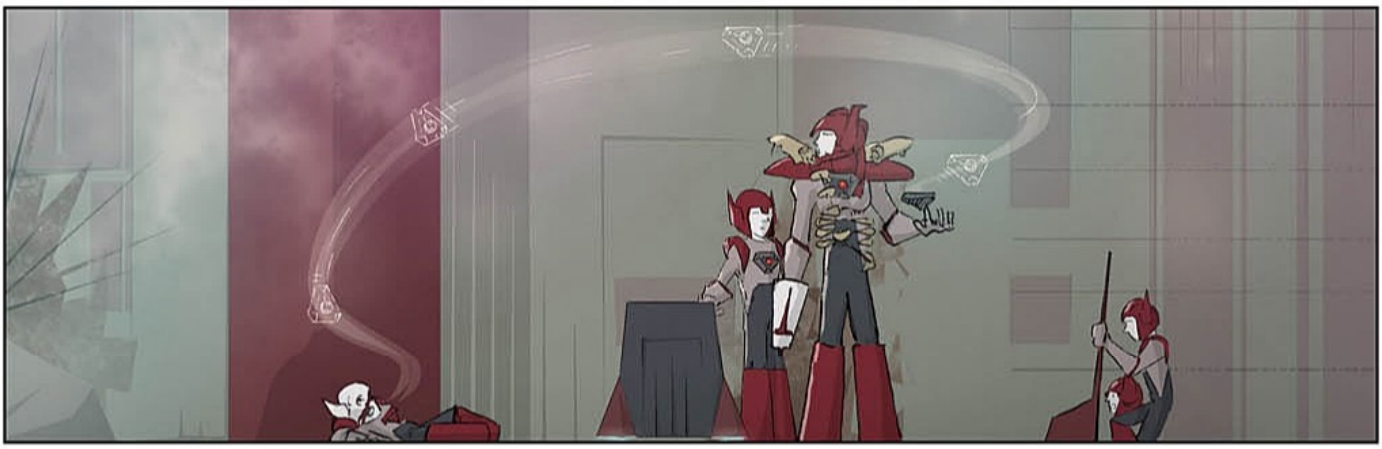


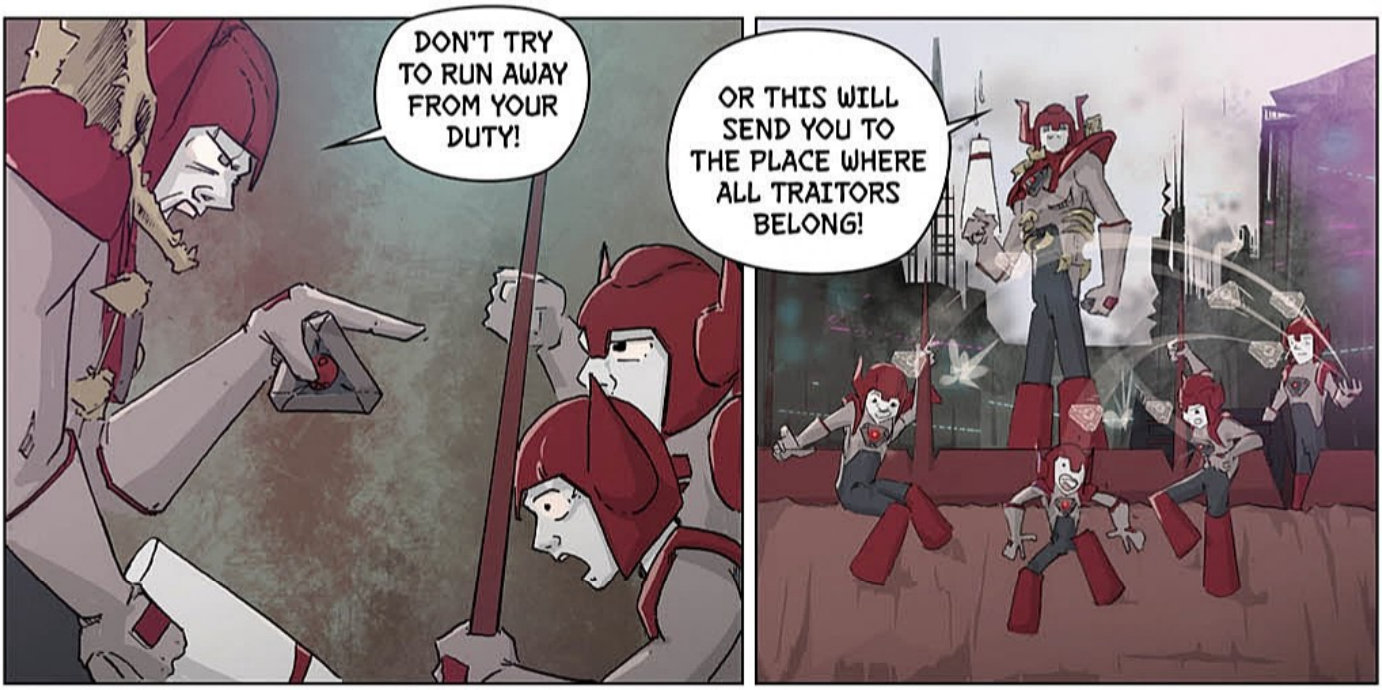

SORRY, I THOUGHT I SAW AN INSECT.


I COME BEARING GIFTS!

OH, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.
CLICK!
OUR LEADER KNEW SOME TRAITORS WOULD REVEAL THEMSELVES.
BUT THROUGH *HIS* LOVE, WE WILL WIN THIS WAR!
YOUR LEADER ONLY LOVED HIMSELF!

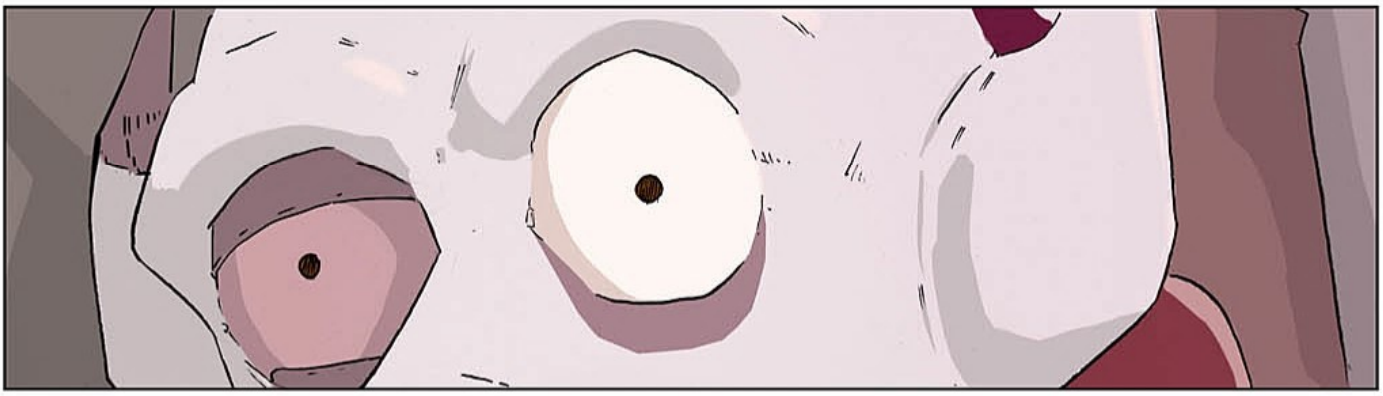


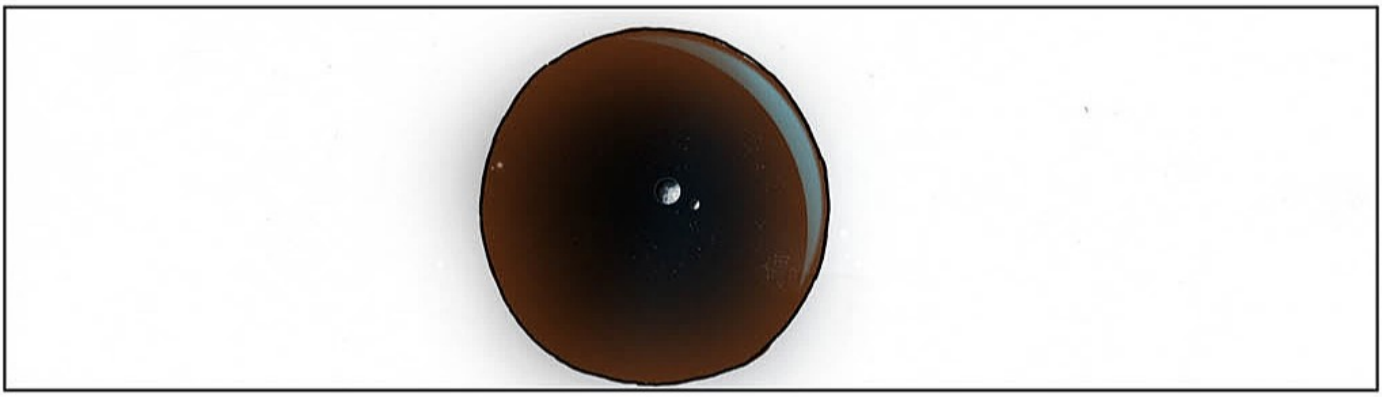



DON'T TRY TO RUN AWAY FROM YOUR DUTY!
OR THIS WILL SEND YOU TO THE PLACE WHERE ALL TRAITORS BELONG!

NOW LEAVE THAT WHOLE AND GO KILL SOME KROLQOLS!
LOOK!
HA HA HA!
HE'S MAKING A FUNNY FACE!
HEY...
STOP IT!
HA!
HA HA HA HA HA!
GIVE IT BACK!

HAHA HAHAHA!
INCOMING!
GIVE IT BACK!





OUR LEADER...
HOW... HOW DID HE DIE?
DOESN'T MATTER.

SIR, THEY'VE TAKEN CONTROL OF MOST OF THE GALAXIES!
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
...
THIS CAN'T BE...
MY LEADER...
SIR...
OUR HOME GALAXY IS WELL FORTIFIED. WE CAN REGROUP. WE ARE SUPERIOR!
WE JUST NEED TO GO BACK AND—
RETREAT?

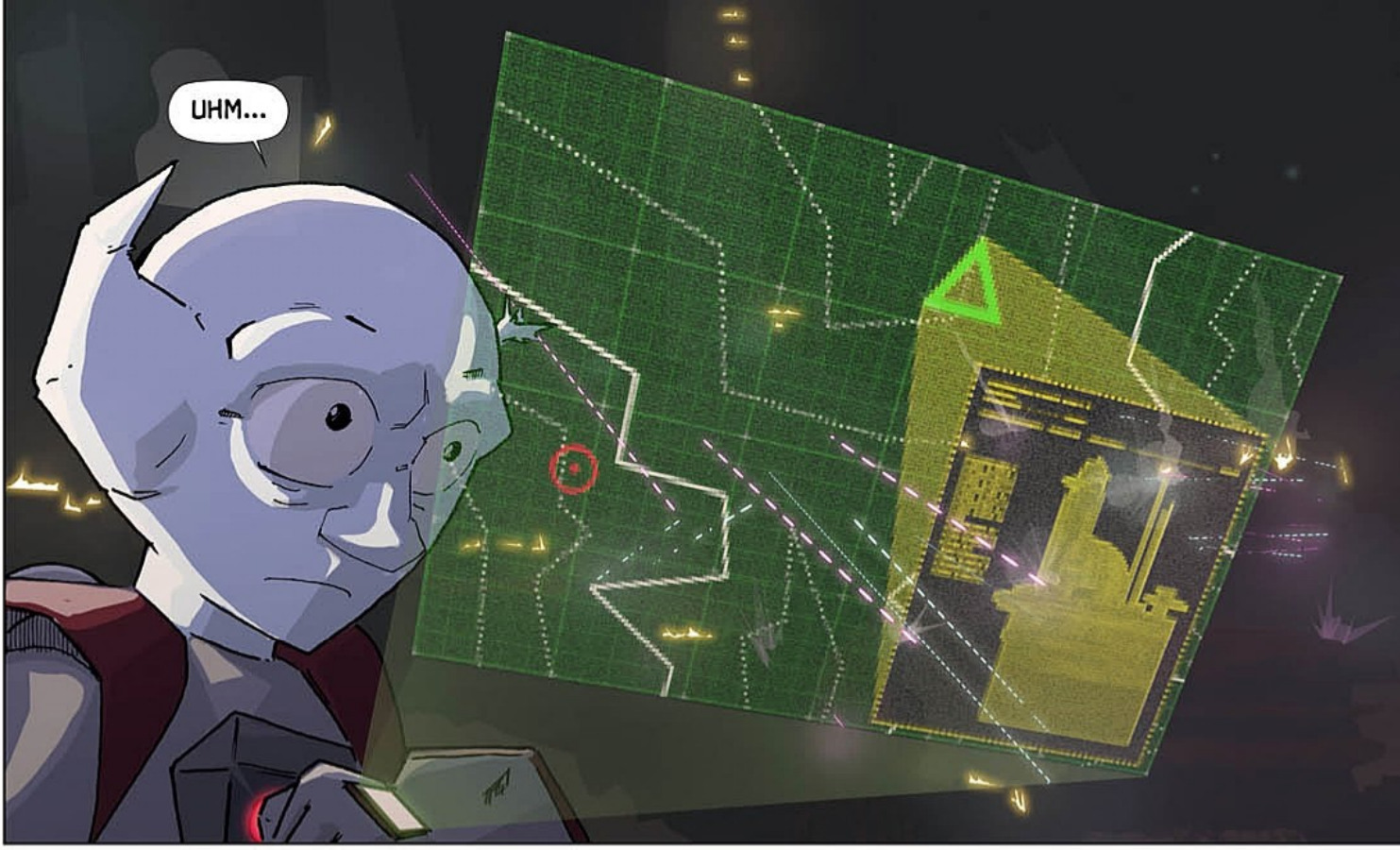
WE DON'T DO THAT!
WE TAKE THE BATTLE TO THEM.
GALAXY RX-136 Z
WE'LL ATTACK THEIR HOME!
SIR... THIS IS A COMMAND SHIP. WE DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF FIREPOWER.
WE ARE NOT GOING BACK!
CONNECTION LOST
CONNECTION LOST
WE GO FORWARD!!!

MOVE TO KROLQOLS BASE ZERO, NOW!
ZAP!!!

FRAAK
DON'T MOVE!
THE UNION?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I... I DON'T KNOW.
GOOD ANSWER! ME NEITHER!

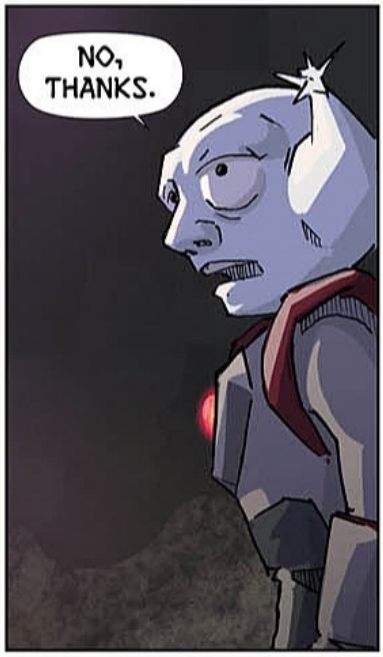
WAIT!
FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD, THE UNION DOESN'T CARE ABOUT US.
I'M NOT FROM THE UNION.
THE ARMOR IS JUST FOR PROTECTION.
IT'S STOLEN.
COOL!
ARE YOU ON THE RUN?
NO.
I MEAN, MAYBE...
FROM MYSELF, I GUESS.
RUNNING FROM YOURSELF?
DOES THAT EVEN WORK?
...
AND WHY COME HERE?
I ENTERED AN INTERUNIVERSAL PORTAL WITHOUT A SET DESTINATION.
AND WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?
FROM WHAT I LEARNED,
YOU COULD HAVE ENDED UP INSIDE A STAR.
YOU COULD HAVE DIED!
...
WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?
WE ARE FIGHTING THE KROLQOLS!
BUT I THINK IT'S TOO LATE.
IF I WERE YOU, I WOULD GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM. QUICK!

I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE TO GO...
I GUESS ANYWHERE YOU GO WILL BE BETTER.
THIS IS NOT A GOOD PLACE TO BE.
IF YOU CAN CHOOSE...
I'M OLD AND TIRED.
AND I'M YOUNG.
GO REST SOMEWHERE IF YOU ARE TIRED.
IF YOU DIE, YOU DON'T REST.
YOU JUST DIE.
WE HAVE AN INTERUNIVERSAL PORTAL.
NOT FAR FROM HERE.
I CAN'T LEAVE THE BATTLE...
BUT YOU CAN!
GO!
AND YOU...
I'LL JUST KEEP GOING.
WHATEVER...
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD ALREADY.
DON'T SAY THAT.
EVERYONE I MET HERE DIED PRETTY QUICK.
NOT ME...
MAYBE I SLEPT PLAYING A GAME, AND THIS IS JUST A BAD DREAM...


UHM...

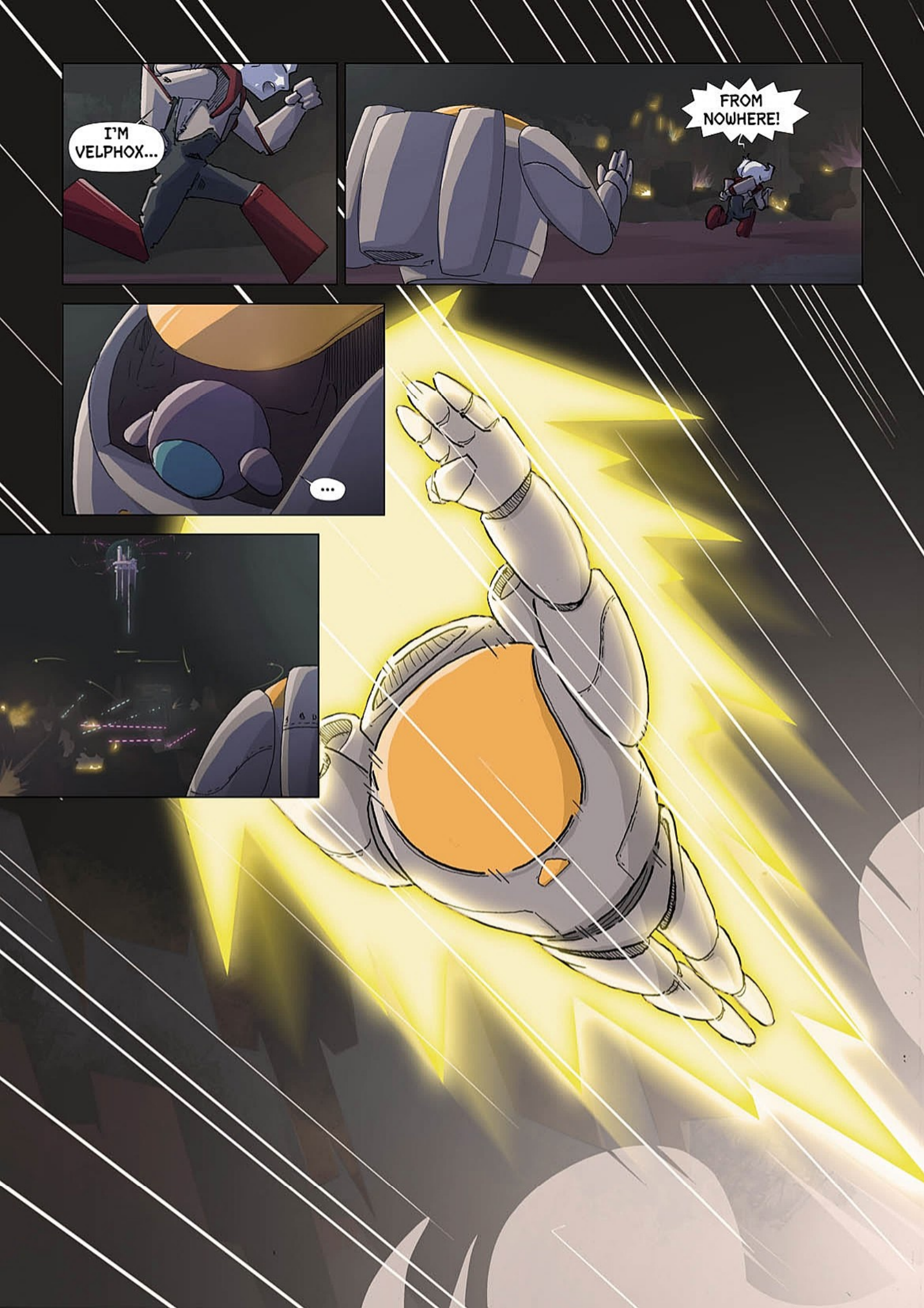
THERE! THAT'S WHERE THE PORTAL SHOULD BE.

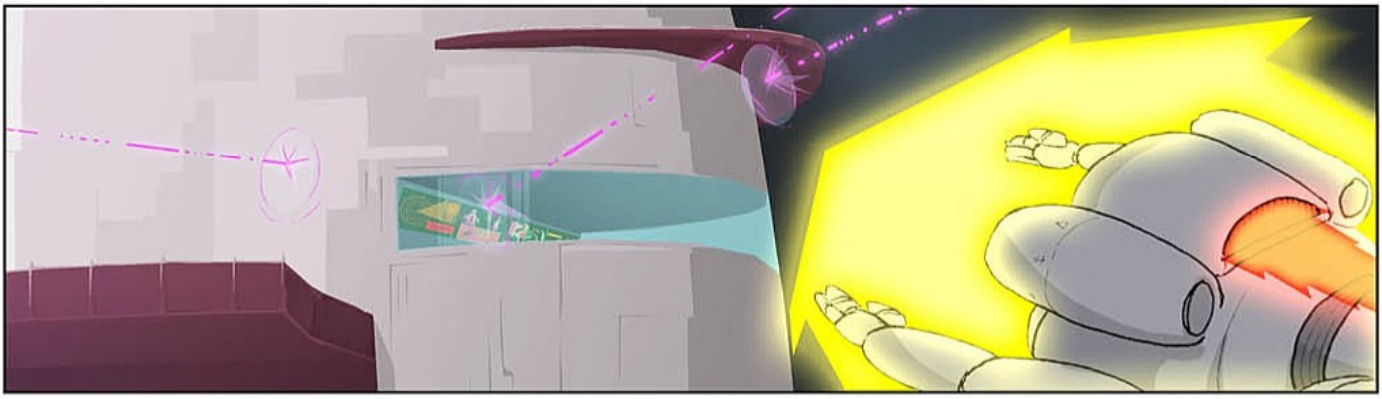
COME WITH ME. WE CAN TRY TO REMOVE THIS THING FROM YOU.

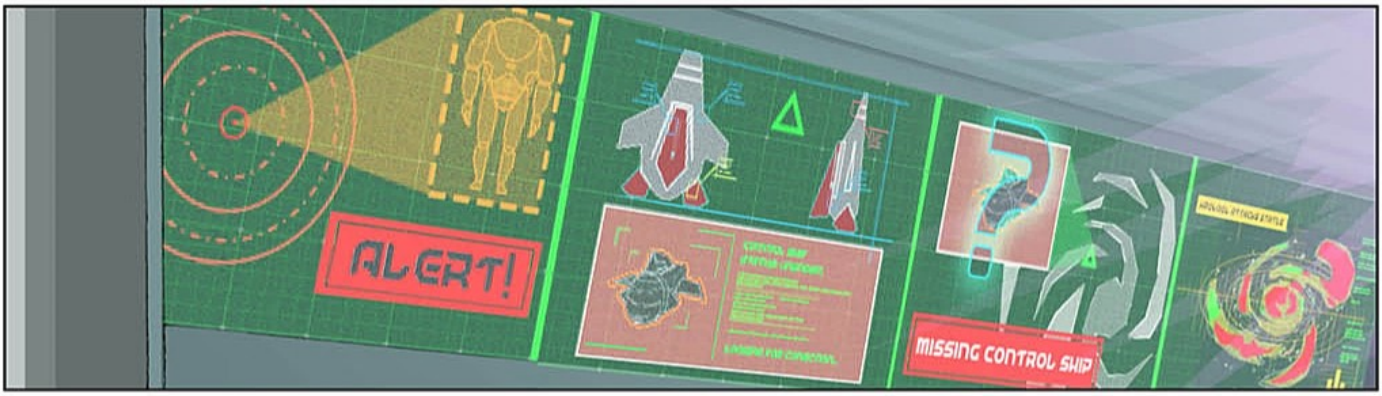

NO, THANKS.

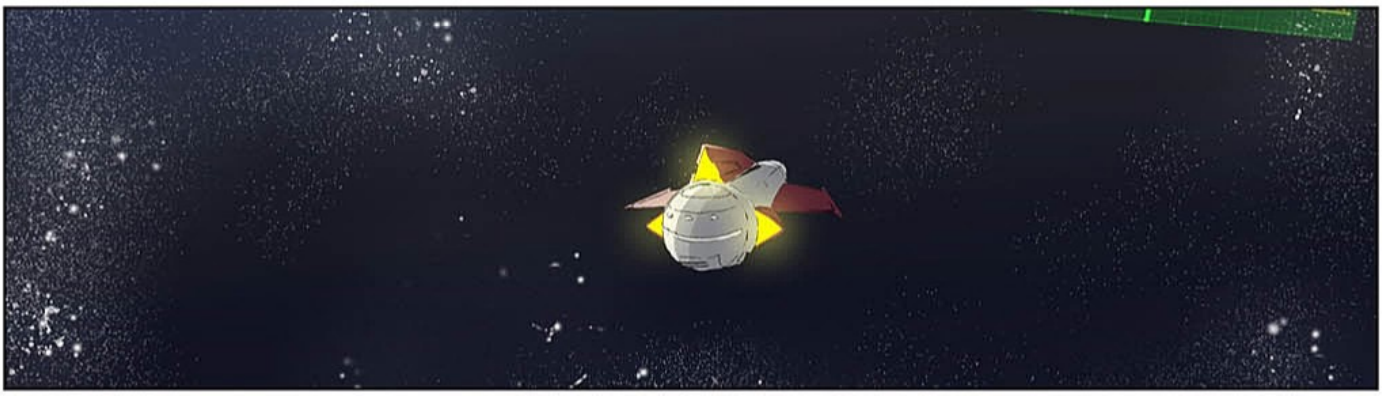
AH!

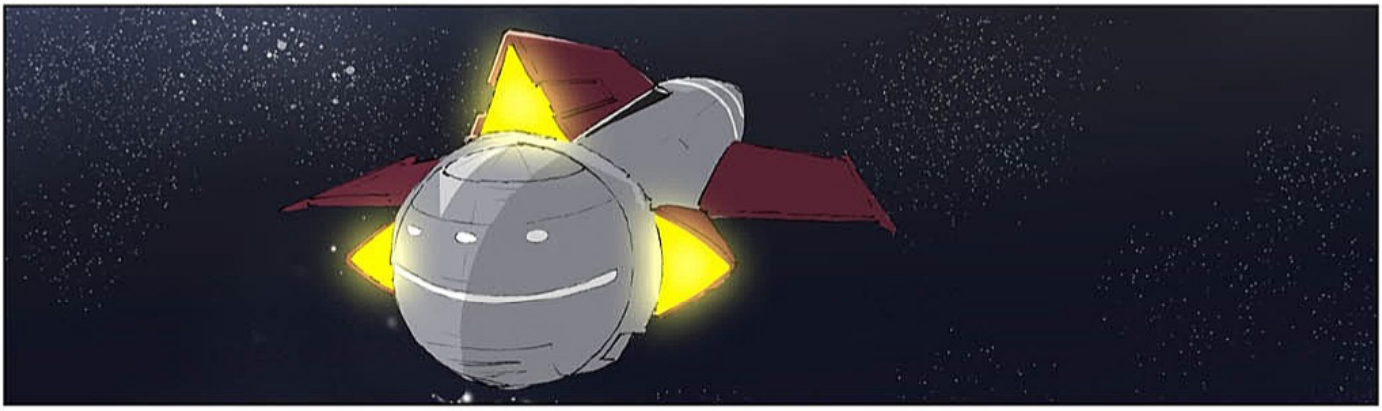
MY NAME IS VELPHOX, FROM—


I'M VELPHOX...
FROM NOWHERE!
...




ALERT!
MISSING CONTROL SHIP

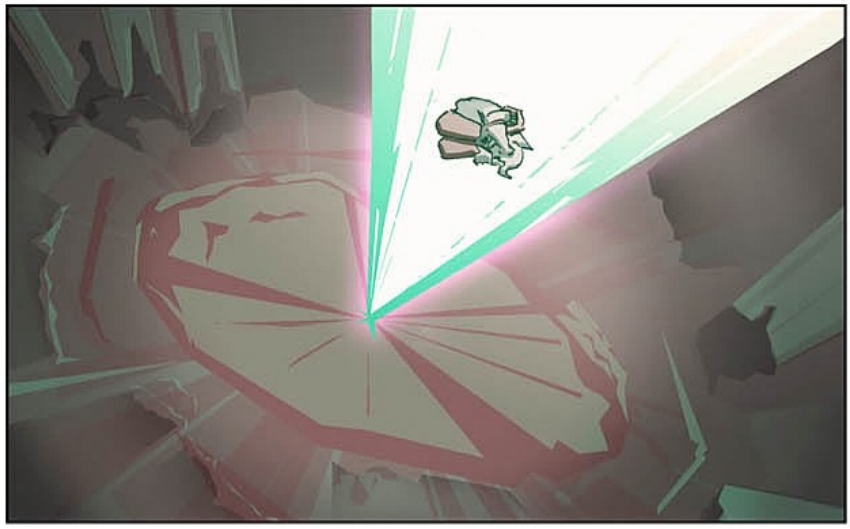


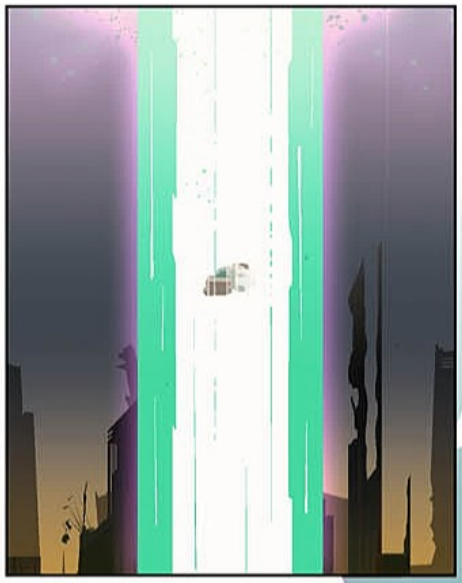


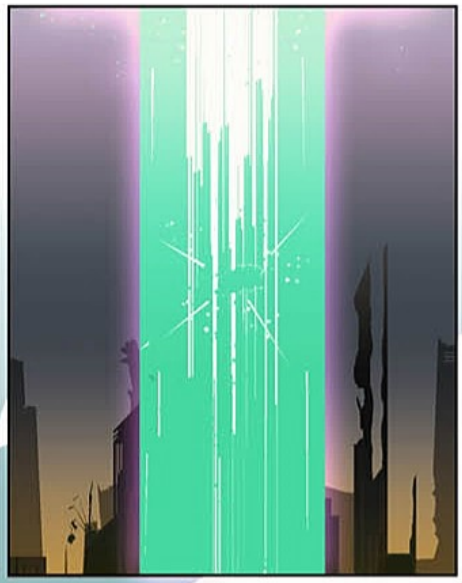
WARNING
HEADQUARTERS CALLING...
I WON'T LET THOSE DAMN KROLQOLS TAKE OUR UNIVERSE!

ALERT!
MISSING CONTROL SHIP
ALERT!
LOWER YOUR WEAPONS!
NOW THAT WE ARE DOOMED, HAS THE UNION DECIDED TO INTERVENE?
GO BACK AND TELL THOSE BASTARDS IT'S TOO LATE.
LISTEN–

PROJECT HARMONY
ACTIVATED
MISSING
!!!
PUT ME IN CONTACT WITH THAT SHIP!
USE THE EMERGENCY CHANNEL!
BUT, SIR...
IT'S A BROADCAST CHANNEL.
THE WHOLE FLEET WILL KNOW ABOUT IT.
DO IT NOW!
RIGHT AWAY, SIR!
EMERGENCY CHANNEL







SIR!
DID YOU GET THE CONNECTION?
NO, BUT–
THEN DO IT! DON'T YOU SEE I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THIS UNION'S EMISSARY?
I NEED YOU HERE, SIR!
DID YOU LOSE YOUR MIND TALKING TO ME LIKE THAT?
SIR, I SAW A ZETA RETICULAN SHIP!
HA HA HA!
YOU SAW SOME FAIRIES TOO?

ARE YOU BEING SERIOUS? THERE ARE NO ZETA RETICULANS IN OUR UNIVERSE.
YES, SIR, I'M SERIOUS.
ONE OF OUR WATCHERS CAPTURED AN EXPLOSION NEARBY.
BY CHANCE, IT WAS TRANSMITTING TO THIS MONITOR AND CAUGHT MY ATTENTION.
THERE WAS A ZETA RETICULAN SHIP THERE!
THEN THE LIVE FEED WENT DARK, AND THE COMPUTER LOST ALL THE RECORDS OF IT.
BUT I KNOW WHAT I SAW.
THEY HAVE THE MEANS TO MASK THEIR PRESENCE.
WHY WOULD THEY LET THEMSELVES BE SEEN?
MAYBE THAT'S WHY THEY HACKED US AND ERASED THE FILES.
NO. YOU SAW THEM... THEY'RE BETTER THAN THAT. UNLESS...
UNLESS THEY DON'T CARE IF WE SEE THEM!
MAYBE THEY DETECTED THE ACTIVATION OF PROJECT HARMONY.
WE NEED TO STOP THAT CRAZY GENERAL FROM USING THAT WEAPON!
MISSING
SIR, THAT'S NOT ALL...
IT APPEARS THAT THEY TOOK ONE OF OURS.
A SOLDIER FROM NOMIA 331X. HE WAS RIGHT IN THE BLAST ZONE.
HE SHOULD BE DEAD, BUT I KEPT RECEIVING HIS SIGNAL.
THEN THE SIGNAL TURNED OMNIDIRECTIONAL BEFORE VANISHING, AS A SIGNAL DOES WHEN ENTERING THE SUBLAYER.
ARCHIVE
WHAT IS GOING ON!?

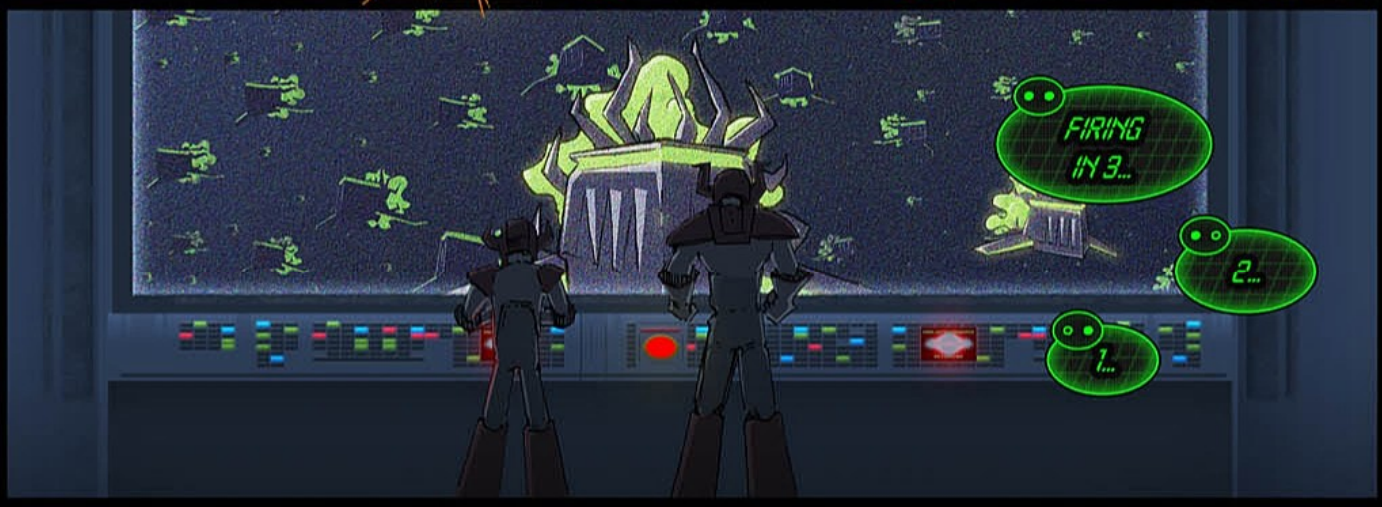
VELPHOX... I KNOW HIM.
YOU ARE HIDING SOMETHING!
RESTRAIN THAT UNIT!
STOP! LET ME EXPLAIN!
LISTEN TO ME!
MISSING
FORCING CONNECTION

I'M NOT FROM THE UNION!
BUT I CAN HELP YOU MAKE PEACE AND STOP THIS WAR.
LET ME TRY!
THERE IS NO PEACE WITH THE KROLQOLS!
IT'S NO USE...
WOOSH!

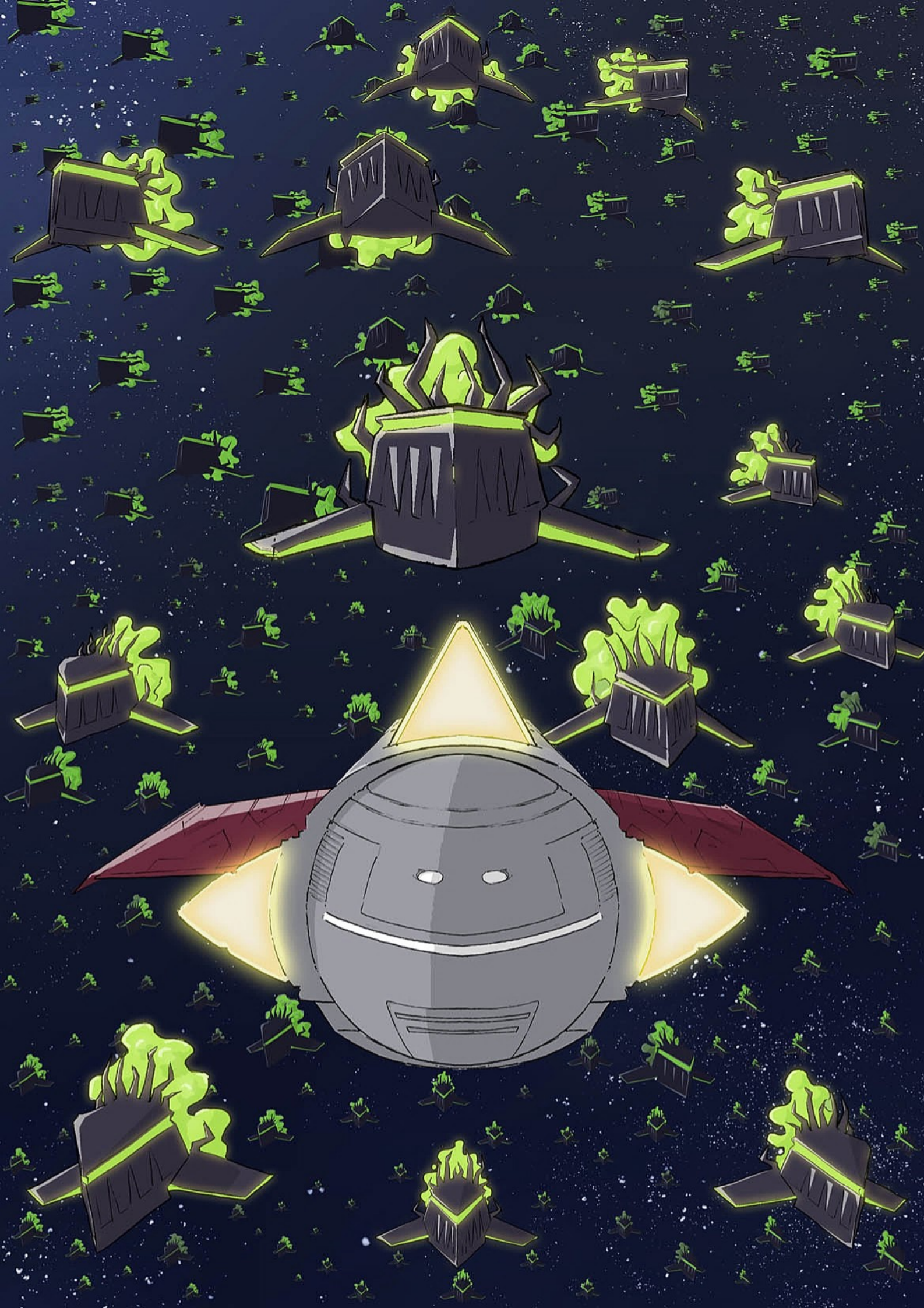
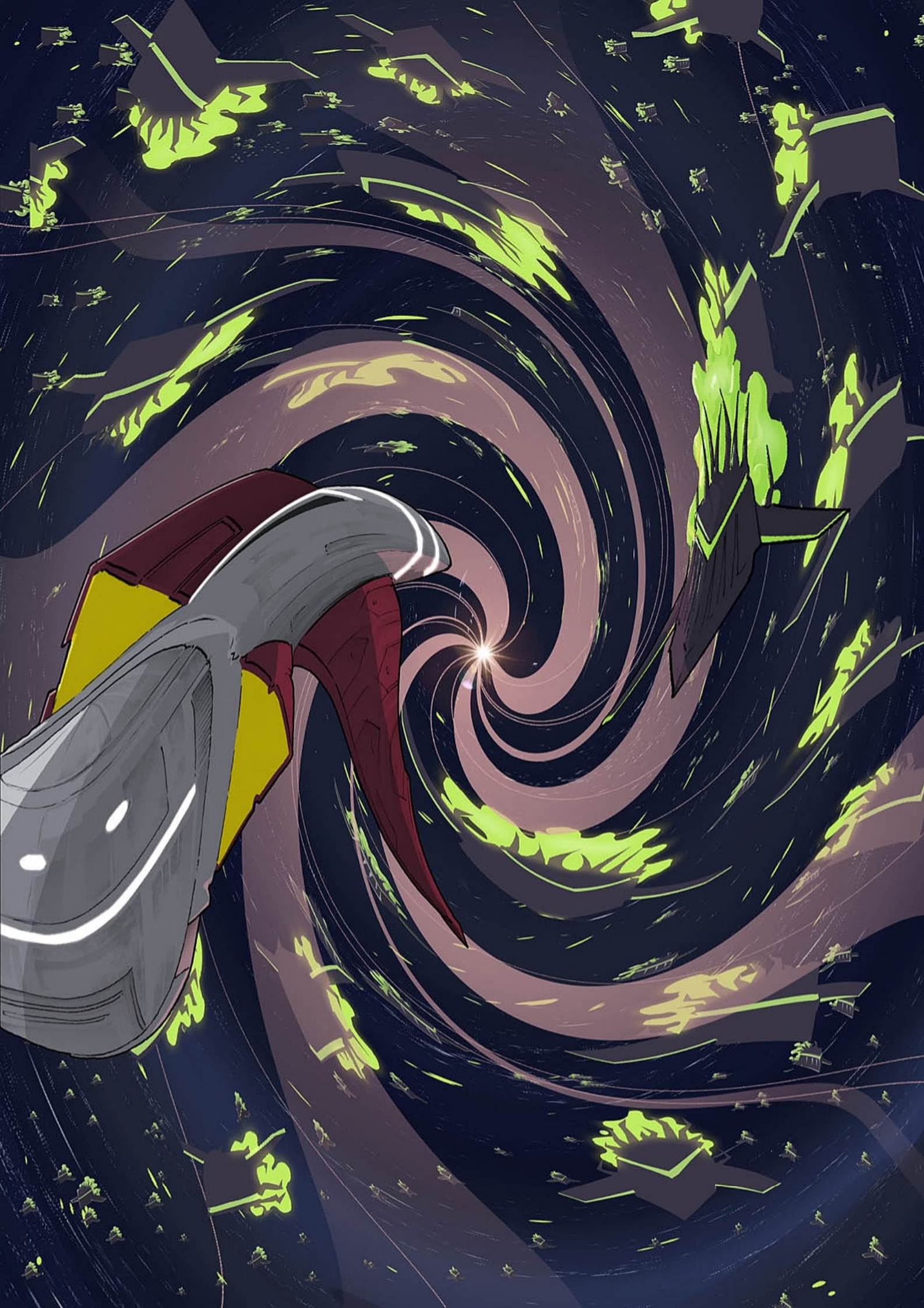
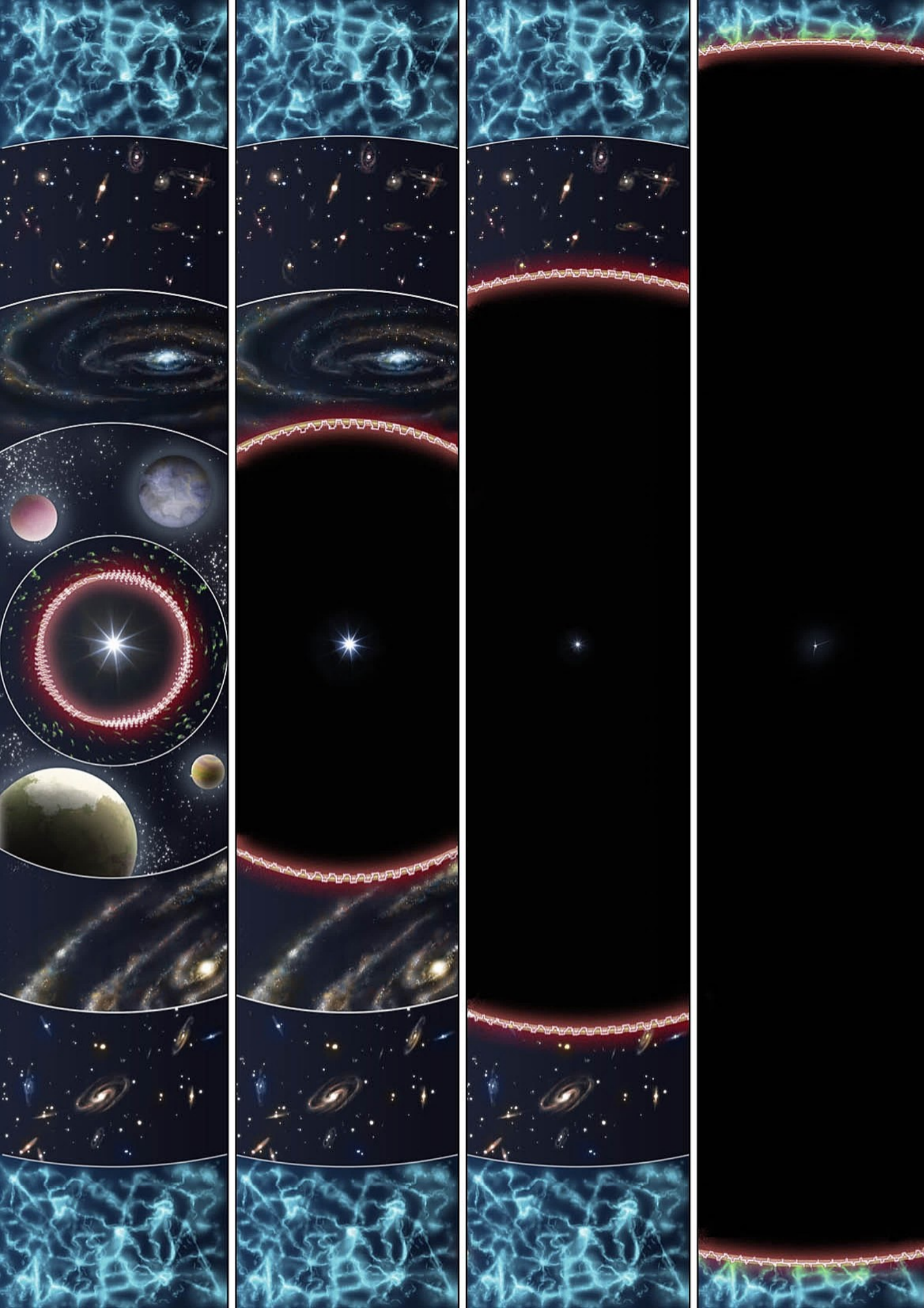
WE'LL DEAL WITH IT LATER!
WHAT ABOUT THE CONTROL SHIP?
NO ANSWER, SIR!
IF HE DOESN'T PICK UP,
SEND A KILL SIGNAL AND DESTROY THAT SHIP!
WE CAN'T RISK THAT WEAPON GOING OFF!
RECONNECTING EMERGENCY CHANNEL...

GET THE DEVICE READY!
BUT, SIR...
THIS WEAPON HAS NEVER BEEN PROPERLY TESTED.
IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, IT COULD CAUSE A VACUUM DECAY.
WE'LL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE END OF THE UNIVERSE!

SO BE IT!
IF WE ARE GOING TO DIE, LET IT BE BY OUR OWN HANDS!
BAM!
ACTIVATED


FIRING IN 3...
2...
1...

ERROR
ARRAY SYNC FAILURE!



MY LEADER, WE WON!